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5 CENTS.

PLUCK AND LUCK

OUT for BUSINESS

OR THE BOY WHO OWNED THE BOAT

AND OTHER STORIES

By HOWARD AUSTIN



Tommy and several others seized hold of Jack and dragged him away from the wheel. "I protest against this!" shouted Jack. "Help! Help!" "We can't help you, Cap," called one of the Highport men.

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PLUCK AND LUCK

Stories of Adventure

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OUT FOR BUSINESS

—OR—

THE BOY WHO OWNED THE BOAT

By HOWARD AUSTIN

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRE AT DR. M'CLOUD'S.

"Yes," said Colonel Bradley, "that's about it; I'm at the end of my rope. Everybody has gone back on me, and it's up to me to kill myself. Jack, I see no other way out of the snarl."

"I don't think much of that way, father," replied Jack Bradley. "Of course it isn't for me to instruct you, but I say it's the coward's way, and I say it boldly, too."

"Well, I suppose it is," replied the colonel, dismally; "but when a man gets up the tree the way I am, what's he going to do? I have worked hard and tried to be an honest man, but I've been robbed and swindled on all sides. What with endorsing notes for one friend and lending money to another and going bonds for a third, my property has all slipped away from me. This house is mortgaged for more than it's worth, and there's nothing left but the boat, which, thank heaven, my creditors can't touch, Jack, seeing that it belongs to you."

"It was a fortunate thing that you fixed the boat as you did, father," replied Jack. "Anyhow, it pays us a living. What would we ever have done during the last few months if it hadn't been for the old Oneonta?"

"Hard telling, Jack. I don't know."

"You are sure your creditors can't touch the boat, father?"

"Oh, yes. You see, it never belonged to me at any time. When I was building the Oneonta ten years ago I foresaw this very trouble, and I made up my mind that the boat should be yours, so I had it put in Dr. McCloud's name to be held in trust for you until you came of age. No one can touch it. The doctor can sell it with your consent, however, but I could not sell it even if I wished."

"I'll sell it if you only say so, if you think it will do you any good, father."

"No, no, Jack. Keep the boat; you are getting to be a first-rate pilot, and it would be foolishness to cut off our only means of living. Perhaps times will be better some of these days. Well, there is no use talking any more about it to-night. I am going to bed."

Jack Bradley sat musing by the fire for a long time after his father retired.

Things were certainly going very badly with his father, there was no denying that, and Jack felt very uneasy about it all, especially about a rumor which he had heard only that day, and to which his father in talking about his troubles made no allusion at all.

For many years Colonel Bradley had been a very prominent man in the town of Dixport, on the banks of Lake Rutherford, a sizable body of water located in one of our Western States.

In his prosperous days Colonel Bradley had done a great deal for the town and for the people individually, but now it was as he said, everything seemed to be going wrong with him, and little by little not only his money but his influence had nearly all slipped away.

Yet Colonel Bradley still held the office of town treasurer, which he had acceptably filled for many years, although of

late there had been a strong effort made to remove him, for since the death of Jack's mother, some three years before, Colonel Bradley had taken to drink, and although never really intoxicated, there were many who did not relish the idea of the town money being in the hands of a drinking man.

This brings us to the rumor. Jack, from his station in the pilot house of the Oneonta, had overheard two men talking about his father on the deck below, and to his horror he heard one say to the other that it was generally believed that if Colonel Bradley could be made to give a statement of the town funds it would be found that his accounts were short many hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars, and further, that a committee was to call on him next morning and demand an accounting at once.

"Perhaps father knows it," thought Jack, as he was undressing in his room that night. "Perhaps that is what makes him so particularly blue just now. I can't believe that there is anything wrong with the town money. I won't believe it, and yet——"

Jack did not finish his sentence. He loved his father dearly, and it seemed worse than treason even to think of the possibility of wrong in his case. Thus the boy broke off in the middle of his thoughts, so to speak, and jumped into bed.

In spite of the troubled state of his mind, Jack soon fell asleep, and probably would have passed a reasonably quiet night if he had not been suddenly aroused somewhere between midnight and morning by a violent knocking on his door.

"Jack! Jack! Get up! Get up, quick!" he heard his father shouting. "Dr. McCloud's house is all afire, and I don't believe any of them know it yet."

When Jack heard that it just seemed to him as if his heart ceased to beat.

He leaped out of bed and pulled on his clothes as rapidly as possible.

"Are you coming?" called his father's voice from the foot of the stairs.

"Yes, yes!" called Jack, and he rushed downstairs two steps at a time.

The front door was open, but Jack saw nothing of his father, so he assumed that he had already gone to the burning building, which was on the opposite side of the street a little further down.

Jack could see the reflection of the fire against the sky as he ran out, and he also caught sight of the flames themselves through the trees, with which Dr. McCloud's elegant residence was very completely surrounded.

Jack rushed down the street, leaped over the fence, and was at his father's side in an instant.

Colonel Bradley was ringing the door-bell violently, at the same time shouting "Fire!" at the top of his lungs.

And, indeed, Colonel Bradley had good reason to be alarmed.

Dr. McCloud was the magistrate of Dixport, a rich and influential man, and he was also not only a particular friend of the colonel, but one might say about the only friend he had left in the town.

The fire seemed to have begun in the cellar near the heater and to have made good headway on the south wing of the house, for flames could be seen shooting out of the second story windows there.

Both Jack and his father knew that this side of the doctor's house had not been occupied since the death of Mrs. McCloud some years before.

The doctor and his only child, a charming young girl about Jack's own age—and that was eighteen years—occupied rooms in the north wing, while the servants all slept in the attic, which connected with the kitchen in the rear of the mansion by a special stairway.

"Fire! Fire!" shouted Colonel Bradley, still pulling at the bell.

"Fire! Fire!" yelled Jack, running around under the windows of the north wing.

Just then the bell of the Methodist church began to toll.

It was about time.

Afterwards it was said that both the town watchmen were sound asleep in a shed behind McFeeter's saloon.

Just then a window was thrown up, and Nina McCloud, partially dressed, looked out.

"Oh, Jack!" she gasped. "Oh, Jack! Save me, Jack! The hall is all ablaze I can't get to the stairs!"

"Stay where you are!" shouted Jack. "I'll get a ladder from over in the barn. Where's your father?"

"Father's away from home. He has gone across the lake to Motford to attend a patient," Nina called back. "The servants are all away but the cook."

"You can stand where you are for a minute, Nina?"

"Yes; but oh, Jack, do be quick!"

"Never fear!" cried Jack, bounding away. "I'll be back in two minutes at the outside!"

"I shall be ready for you," replied Nina. "I want to get some money from father's room," and drawing back from the window, she disappeared.

CHAPTER II.

THE START DOWN THE LAKE.

Jack Bradley stopped only long enough to look for his father, and then dashed on out of the doctor's garden and across to the barn.

Colonel Bradley had disappeared; the big front door had been kicked open, and so thick was the smoke which poured out of the hall that nothing could be seen inside.

"Father! Father!" Jack shouted.

"I'm in here!" came the answer through the smoke. "I heard what Nina said, Jack! Best thing you can do is to get the ladder. I'll go through to the back stairs and save the cook."

Jack was on the wing while his father was speaking.

He had the ladder up under the window inside of five minutes, but Nina did not appear.

Of course Jack wasted no time.

He went bounding up the ladder and looked into the room.

One glance told the story.

Nina lay stretched upon the floor in a dead faint.

In one hand she clutched her jewel-box, in the other her father's jannped cash-box.

The flames were already bursting through the partition behind the poor girl when Jack lifted her in his arms and carried her down the ladder.

By this time Dixport's solitary fire engine was upon the scene, and the crowd had begun to gather.

There were many ready to lend Jack a helping hand.

Nina was carried over to Colonel Bradley's house, while Jack went back for the cash-box, got it and was at the girl's side when her senses returned.

By this time Dr. McCloud's house was all in flames.

Mrs. Mix, the cook, had been rescued by Colonel Bradley, who roused the good woman from her bed and, according to her own statement, fairly dragged her down the back stairs.

"Where's my father now?" demanded Jack, when Captain Dale of the Eagle Fire Company told him this.

Others stood nearby looking very grave.

The house was past saving; from foundation to roof it was a mass of roaring flames.

"Now, Jack, brace up," replied Captain Dale. "Take it easy, boy."

"Take what easy? Where's father? Why don't some one speak? What are you all looking at me that way for? I want to see him."

Then they told him—told him as gently as possible.

According to Mrs. Mix, Colonel Bradley had run back into

the house again, saying that he must break open Dr. McCloud's desk and save his private papers, if he could.

"And he never came out again?" asked Jack, his face as white as death.

"I am very sorry to say, Jack, that he has not been seen since," solemnly replied Captain Dale.

Now it was Jack's turn to faint, and he dropped like a log at the feet of Captain Dale.

Half an hour later nothing but a heap of ashes remained to mark the spot where Dr. McCloud's handsome residence had formerly stood.

* * * * *

The week which followed the fire was the saddest of Jack Bradley's life.

Nothing was seen or heard of his father. It appeared to be quite certain that the colonel had perished in the flames.

Jack believed it firmly. So did Dr. McCloud and Nina; yet there were those in Dixport who viewed the matter in an entirely different light, for when the town committee, of which Dr. McCloud himself was at their head, came to look into Colonel Bradley's affairs, it was discovered that \$10,000 of the town's money was missing. That Jack's father had appropriated it there could be no doubt.

So there were some persons in Dixport who insisted that Colonel Bradley had made off with the money, and had never gone a second time into the burning house.

There were others who went still further, and did not hesitate to assert that Colonel Bradley had set the house afire for the purpose of destroying the town books, which had been turned over into Dr. McCloud's possession the day before.

As a matter of fact, the books were destroyed, and there was now no proof against the colonel, but they had been carefully examined by the committee before the fire, and the true state of the case was well known.

Still the town would lose but half the amount after Colonel Bradley's insurance was paid. This was for the sum of \$5,000 for Jack's benefit.

In view of all the circumstances, Jack promptly turned the claim over to the town, also the house, for what it might prove to be worth.

Nevertheless, the insurance company refused to pay, and this gave countenance to the stories so painful to poor Jack—that his father was still alive.

So these were dark days for Jack Bradley, but he continued to attend to his business running the old Oneonta daily between Dixport and Lowport, at the bottom of the lake, thence to Motford and other landings on the opposite shore, and so on to Highport, at the head of the lake and back to Dixport again.

So far no attempt had been made to get the boat away from Jack, although rumors were afloat that Colonel Bradley's smaller creditors were going to try for it.

About this Jack was not worrying much, for Dr. McCloud, who stood by the day thoroughly, assured him that they could not succeed.

* * * * *

"Hello, Jack! By gracious, this is a fine morning, isn't it, boy?"

"Good-morning, Captain Hanks. Yes, it is, indeed; looks as though there might be a little snow in those clouds off in the southwest, though, if they ever get a start on them. What do you say?"

"Wall, neow, Jack, you're beginning to read the signs of the weather almost as well as the old man. It does look threatening off there; still I don't hardly think the storm will come along before tonight."

"Let her come," said Jack. "Where is Net Trotter? Has he shown up yet?"

"Not yet. Expect him any minute. Ned's a good boy, and never hangs back. I suppose you have heard that Senator Tyburn is going to attach the boat, Jack. They say he holds your father's note for \$2,000, and he says he can knock your claim all into a cocked hat; leastways, that's the talk all over town."

"Let him try it," replied Jack. "I own the boat. It never was my father's. Some may think that I ought to give it up to the creditors. I don't. I propose to run it. Every dollar I make out of it over and above my living expenses shall go toward paying my father's debts, but not the boat. That's mine, and I propose to keep it. I'll fight for it to the last gasp."

"Hooray! Them's my sentiments!" cried Captain Hanks, throwing up his hat. "Three cheers for Captain Jack. Stick to it, boy. I don't want to lose my job."

Now, Captain Hanks' job was a sinecure, if ever there was one.

The old man was the nominal master of the Oneonta. It was he who held the license which Jack's age prevented him from obtaining.

Jack, however, had been running the boat now for a year—ever since Captain Hanks' arm became paralyzed.

The captain accompanied him on each trip and drew \$12 a week for so doing, but he never interfered with Jack's management of the boat by so much as a word.

Ding, dong! Ding, dong! Ding, dong!

The bell was ringing now, and the Oneonta was about to start.

Ned Trotter, the engineer, was at his post; the deck-hands were at theirs; Captain Hanks stood by the gang-plank shouting:

"All aboard for Lowport, Highport, and all the other ports! All ashore that's going ashore."

Jack himself was in the pilot-house ready at the wheel.

"All right, Jack!" sang out Captain Hanks. "Shall I let her go?"

"Hold on!" cried Jack. "Some one coming in a carriage. It's Dr. McCloud, I think. It won't do to leave him behind."

Jack was right.

The carriage, which now came dashing down the wharf, proved to be Dr. McCloud's.

The doctor himself and Nina were in it.

Nina was bound for Highport to do some shopping, while the doctor wanted to take the train for Chicago, which left at 12 o'clock.

"Thank you ever so much for waiting, Jack!" the doctor called out in his bluff way, as he came on board. "I didn't decide till the last minute that I wanted to go with you. Sorry to have kept you waiting, my boy."

"That's all right, sir," replied Jack. "We have only lost five minutes, and I'll soon make that up. Now, Captain Hanks, let her go."

The captain ordered the plank pulled in and the lines cast off, and Jack, giving Ned Trotter the bell, the Oneonta swung around and started on her trip down the lake.

CHAPTER III.

SENATOR TYBURN SHOWS HIS HAND.

Jack only had about a dozen passengers that morning. It was an unusually light load.

After the boat left Lowport and started up the lake on the other side for Motford, its first landing, Dr. McCloud and his daughter came along the upper deck, and taking their stand by the open window of the pilot-house, began to talk with Jack.

"You mustn't run off and leave me when you start from Highport, Jack," said Nina. "I shall expect you to blow your whistle three times, and then give me time to get down from Main street to the wharf."

"If it was anybody but you, Jack, I would not trust Nina alone in Highport, for I wouldn't have her left there over night for the world," said Dr. McCloud.

"You can trust me in anything in which Nina is concerned, just as you would yourself," replied Jack.

"Don't I know it?" said the doctor, feelingly. "You don't have to tell me that. I haven't forgotten so soon that we owe the life of this little girl to you; but never mind that. I suppose you noticed that Sheriff Rustin is on board?"

"I did. He is standing down there on the forward deck now."

"Have you thought at all what it might mean, Jack?"

"Why, no, sir; the sheriff often rides with me."

"Well, I don't know myself," continued the doctor, "and I don't want to stir you up, but it wouldn't surprise me if some attempt was made to attach the boat to-day on a court order Senator Tyburn is said to have obtained."

"They can't do it, can they, doctor?" asked Jack, a good deal disturbed.

"Well, they certainly can attach it," replied the doctor; "but when it comes to holding it, that's altogether another thing. I only want to warn you. You understand, of course, that I'm right at your back whatever occurs. You want to take it easy and not slop over in case anything does happen, Jack."

Jack made no reply, but he felt greatly worried just the same, and he was on the lookout for trouble as the Oneonta approached Motford wharf.

Captain Hanks came up about that time.

"Say, Jack, there's a big crowd on the wharf a-waitin' for us. I suppose you see 'em?" he remarked.

"Why, of course, I see 'em, not being blind," replied Jack. "I think it's only Tommy Tyburn and a lot of the institute boys going up the lake. To-day is Saturday, you know."

"I think the senator is there, too," said Captain Hanks, "that tall man with the plug hat. I see the sheriff is aboard, too. It strikes me there's likely to be music in the air about now—what do you say, boy? Hey?"

"It's time enough to face the music when the band comes along. That's what I say," replied Jack, giving his wheel a twist.

As the Oneonta came up to the wharf Jack saw that both he and Captain Hanks had been quite right.

Tommy Tyburn, the only son of the magnate of Motford, was there with some twenty of his school fellows. They all carried baskets and stout canes, and Jack saw at a glance that they were probably going nutting on Bald Hill on the other side of the lake.

Senator Tyburn was there, too, besides several other prominent citizens of Motford.

Just as soon as the boat was tied up the boys made a rush aboard, shouting and yelling, and making themselves decidedly fresh, as they usually did.

"Hold on there, Captain Hanks!" cried Jack, coming out of the pilot-house. "Where are those boys bound? We can't pull over to Windport this morning. We are behind time now, and if we cross the lake we shall miss connections at Highport, and there are several passengers aboard who want to take the train."

"Hello, up there, you!" cried the senator, hurrying down to the stringpiece. "I was just going to tell you that our boys are going up Bald Hill nutting. You want to pull right over there and land them now."

"Can't do it, sir," replied Jack, firmly, but civilly, in spite of the insolence of Senator Tyburn's speech. "I'll drop them on my way down the lake. That's the best I can do. We ought to have been notified of this."

"Can't do it!" roared the great man, swelling up like a turkey-cock. "Well, then you will do it. Do you suppose the boys want to stay on the mountain all night? What do you mean by your impudence? You will take the boys across the lake right now."

"No, sir," replied Jack, firmly. "I must make my connections. It can't be done."

"Good!" cried Dr. McCloud.

"Stick to it!" another passenger cried out. "What's the matter with the man? Does he think he owns the boat? Does he think I want to miss my train?"

Trouble was at hand. Jack saw it plainly. So did Dr. McCloud.

Sheriff Rustin had already gone on deck, and the doctor and Nina now followed him.

Tommy Tyburn and the institute boys were pushing about on the lower deck, and when the senator sprang aboard, as he immediately did, his son and several of the boys followed him up the stairs.

"You own the boat, do you?" cried the senator, approaching Jack in the most offensive manner. "Do you feel very sure that you own the boat?"

"I certainly labor under that impression, sir," replied Jack, doing his best to keep calm.

"Well, then, let me tell you that you don't!" stormed the senator. "Mr. Rustin, that's your cue!"

"I protest!" exclaimed Dr. McCloud, pushing forward with Nina on his arm. "I happen to know that this boy does own the boat."

"Did, you mean," sneered the sheriff, thrusting a legal paper upon Jack.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tommy Tyburn, in which laugh the other boys joined.

"That's it," said the senator. "The sheriff is in charge here now. Make yourself scarce, young step-and-fetch-it! We propose to run this boat over to Windport, train or no train!"

CHAPTER IV.

BLUFF AND COUNTER BLUFF.

Jack Bradley made no reply to Senator Tyburn's insolent remarks, nor to the noisy demand of Sheriff Rustin that he vacate his place in the pilot-house and give up the boat.

On the contrary, he paid as little attention to them as though they had never spoken.

"Captain Hanks, take my place in the pilot-house!" he called out.

"Aye, aye, captain!" cried the old salt.

He hurried into the pilot-house, locked the door, and had the wheel before any one could interfere.

"All aboard!" shouted Jack. "Cast off there, boys! That's the talk! Lively, now! Lively!"

"Here! Hold on! I'm not going up the lake!" Senator Tyburn called out.

He was too late. Jack did not countermand his order, and the deck-hands paid no attention to the senator's cry.

The plank was pulled in, and the lines cast off. Obeying Jack's order, Captain Hanks gave Ned Trotter the bell, and the Oneonta swung out into the lake, with Senator Tyburn stamping about the deck wild with rage and roaring out:

"Stop! Stop! Stop her, I say!"

Now, of course, no one but an ill-bred, tyrannical man would have acted in the way Senator Tyburn had done.

The senator was both.

He was many times a millionaire and a man accustomed to having his own way.

As for Tommy and the institute boys, they would no doubt have fallen upon Jack and made things lively for him if Dr. McCloud and several other gentlemen among the passengers had not stepped in front of them and warned them to keep back.

"What do you mean by this, you young rascal?" cried the senator, facing Jack. "Sheriff, I order you to arrest that boy!"

"Why, I can't do that, senator," replied the sheriff. "He has done nothing to warrant arrest, and I don't care to get myself into trouble. I've served the writ of attachment on him, and with that my responsibility ends."

"We'll see about that!" roared the senator. "Just wait until election comes again."

"I'm an independent American citizen, sir," answered the sheriff, who belonged to the opposite political party from Senator Tyburn. "I'm not to be bulldozed by any one. I understand my business, and that's enough."

"Good! Good for you, Rustin! We'll stand by you!" several in the crowd sang out.

Senator Tyburn hauled in his horns.

He saw that he had gone a step too far.

Still he had not the least notion of retreating from his position. He only wanted time to think.

Meantime, Jack, restrained by a warning look from Dr. McCloud, had remained perfectly quiet until now.

"Well, Mr. Rustin," he said, "I don't profess to know much about the law. Am I to run this steamer or not? There are others aboard here besides Senator Tyburn, and I presume some of them would like to know."

"You can do as you like, Jack, for all of me," laughed the sheriff. "I'm in charge here. I can't run the Oneonta, for I don't know how to steer."

"This thing wants to be settled at once," spoke up the senator. "I have business to attend to. I don't want to go up the lake. I order you to put back to Motford wharf and put me ashore."

"Mr. Tyburn, now that you seem inclined to assume a little more civil tone, I am willing to answer you," said Jack, with all the calmness he could assume, although as a matter of fact the boy possessed a hot temper of his own and was inwardly bursting with rage. "I have business to attend to as well as you. I'm out for business first, last and all the time, and just now my business is to get these passengers to Highport in time to make their connections with the noon trains."

"Hooray! Hooray for Captain Jack!" several sang out.

"This is outrageous!" cried the senator. "Is a man of my age and position to be bearded by a mere boy? Sheriff, I demand that you do your duty and take possession of this boat."

"That's just what I have done, senator," replied the sheriff, laughing, as he bit off the end of a fresh cigar. "I shall not go a step further."

"Very well, sir! I shall make it my business to have you impeached and removed from office!" roared the senator. "I shall take possession of this boat myself."

"No, you won't," said Dr. McCloud, speaking for the first time.

"Doctor, what do you mean? What business is it of yours to interfere in this?" the senator cried.

"Jack, let me see that document," said the doctor, holding out his hand for the writ of attachment which Jack still held.

Jack passed it over, and the doctor opened it and glanced over its contents.

"Sheriff, you may take that back," he said. "It's not worth the paper it's written on. Jack, get back into the pilot-house and attend to your business, my boy. Captain Hanks is not able to handle the boat. He is endangering all our lives."

"What do you mean by this, Dr. McCloud?" again demanded the senator. "By what right do you interfere?"

"By the right of being this boy's guardian in the matter of this boat, and so appointed by Colonel Bradley before the boat was ever built," replied the doctor in his usual mild and gentlemanly way. "This boat never belonged to Colonel Bradley at any time. It was a gift to me to be held in trust for his son."

"Good! Good! You have run up against the wrong man!" several cried out.

Senator Tyburn began to cool down.

"That don't go," McCloud said, mildly. "I stand on my rights, and the writ does not hold!" putting his hand into his inside coat pocket, and producing a legal paper, which he handed to the sheriff.

"This, Mr. Rustin," he explained, "is an injunction from the Supreme Court prohibiting the service of a writ of attachment on this boat, obtained yesterday. Disobey it if you dare."

"No intention of doing anything of the sort!" exclaimed the sheriff. "This is a knocker, Mr. Tyburn. Count me out on this."

"Let me see the paper!" bellowed the senator. "Pooh! Stuff! Nonsense! Pay no attention to it! Only a bluff!"

Senator Tyburn had lost his head, and was making a fool of himself.

While this was going on Jack stepped to the door of the pilot-house.

"Let me in, cap!" he said to Captain Hanks.

The captain unlocked the door, and Jack was just in the act of entering the pilot-house, when it occurred to Master Tommy Tyburn that it was time for him to take a hand in.

"Stop him, fellows!" he shouted, and rushing upon Jack he caught hold of his shoulder and tried to pull him back.

This, however, was the time that Tommy did not "get there."

Jack was watching the "son of his father," out of one corner of his eye, and was all ready for him.

Quick as lightning he let Master Tommy feel the full weight of his hand, and sent him sprawling on the deck.

Of course there was a great hullabaloo in an instant.

By that time Jack was in the pilot-house steering, with the door locked.

"Clear the deck here! Clear the deck! Don't interfere with the pilot!" shouted Captain Hanks.

The Tyburnites, including the senator, retreated breathing vengeance; the rest of the crowd went away laughing and cheering Jack, for Senator Tyburn was an ex-senator, and did not belong to the party at present in power; besides which, his arrogance and tyrannical ways had all helped to make him a very unpopular man.

"You'll run this boat over to Windport, or I'll know the reason why!" the great man roared as he retreated.

"I'll not run it to Windport. I'm out for business, and my business demands that I run the Oneonta to Highport," replied Jack, with a defiant twist of the wheel.

CHAPTER V.

TOMMY TYBURN CAPTURES THE BOAT BUT CAN'T MAKE IT GO

"Well, Jack, we have gained a great victory," remarked Dr. McCloud, coming up to the window of the pilot-house a little later on.

"Yes, thanks to you, sir," replied Jack. "How can I ever really repay you? Of course I could not have held my position if it had not been for the injunction which you had the forethought to take out."

"Well, I don't know about that," laughed the doctor. "You were doing pretty well as it was, and as for thanking me, that you don't have to do. The weight of obligation is all on my side. Do you suppose I can ever forget that you saved Nina from an awful fate? But never mind about that now, Jack. I merely want to caution you about those boys. They have all gathered in a knot on the stern deck, and are evidently plotting mischief. There are twenty of them, and after you let off your Westport passengers there will only be five persons left, not counting the deck hands and Captain Hanks—nine altogether, or eleven if you count yourself."

"And the sheriff?" said Jack.

"The sheriff has changed his mind. He goes off at Westport, and I think Senator Tyburn intends to do the same. He is apparently very meek just now, but, mark my words, it's only a case of laying back for another spring."

"All right, sir," replied Jack. "I'll look out, never you fear."

Dr. McCloud withdrew to the cabin, and busied himself with some legal papers.

Jack called out for Captain Hanks and held a whispered conversation with him.

"Good!" said the captain. "That's the talk! Let them try it if they dare! We'll show old Tyburn that he don't run the earth!"

Then Jack went on with his steering, and Captain Hanks went from one to another of the Highport passengers, and drawing them aside held a whispered conversation with them.

Meanwhile there was a great deal of whispering going on among the Institute Boys on the stern deck, with Tommy Tyburn the center of the group.

Senator Tyburn was with them at the start, but he quickly withdrew, and paced the forward deck until the Oneonta approached Westport, a small village on his side of the lake.

Just before the boat came up to the wharf the senator happened along by the pilot-house window.

"Young man," he said, in a tone as nearly civil as he was able to assume to an inferior, "you have made a great mistake. Your father was once my friend, and I would have been yours. My purpose in seizing this boat was simply to keep it out of the hands of his other creditors. Now it is war between us—war to the knife. Perhaps you do own it, but it is certainly all you do own, while I have a few dollars to draw on, I believe, and let me tell you that I never let up on an enemy, and that's what you became to me the moment you laid the weight of your hand on my son."

"Thank you, sir," replied Jack, respectfully. "I am much obliged to you for the warning, I am sure. I will be on my guard."

"You had better," said the senator, spitefully, and then he walked away.

Senator Tyburn left the boat at Westport, as did most of the other passengers.

There were still two calls to make, one on the west side of the lake and one on the east. Windport had now been left three miles behind on the east side; the Oneonta only called there on her up trips twice a week, although she always stopped going down the lake to bring back such of the Windporters as might have driven up to Highport and wanted to return.

After the boat pulled away from Windport, it was noticeable that the Highport passengers all gathered on the forward deck, and, including Doctor McCloud and Nina, stood talking in a group.

The three deck hands, Charley Bright, George Thompson and Sam Fisher, disappeared altogether.

Captain Hanks hung around the upper deck. Not one of the Institute boys was to be seen forward.

"How are things working, cap?" asked Jack, as Captain Hanks drew near.

"They hain't made no move yet," replied the captain. "Mebbe they hain't going to. I dunno."

"Did Senator Tyburn say anything when he went ashore? I thought I saw him speaking to you," said Jack.

"He said he'd have to hire a team to take him down to Motford, that was all."

Jack now turned his boat across the lake to make his stop at Sullivan, a small town on the east side of the lake, located about five miles above Windport, Bald Hill lying between the two.

The Oneonta was about half across the lake when the yell of the "Tyburn Institute," as the educational establishment of which Motford was so proud was called, rang out, and twenty-odd boys, led by Tommy Tyburn, came rushing along the upper deck.

"Get back! Get back!" cried Captain Hanks, barring the way.

"Out of the road, you old snoozer!" shouted Tommy. "We'll chuck you overboard if you interfere with us!"

"Cap! Cap! Look out for yourself! I can't do nothing with these boys!" yelled Captain Hanks, drawing to one side.

Jack kept on steering, and never said a word.

Down the forward companionway about ten of the boys went dashing, and surrounded the passengers on the forward deck, while the others, led by Tommy, made a dash for the pilot-house.

They found the door unfastened, contrary to their expectations.

Tommy and several others seized hold of Jack and dragged him away from the wheel.

"I protest against this!" shouted Jack. "Help! Help!"

"We can't help you, cap. You'll have to paddle your own canoe!" called out one of the Highport men, laughing.

"I haven't got any injunction that goes against pirates," called out Dr. McCloud. "Sorry, Jack, but I can't help you now."

"You had better not try it, any of you!" shouted Tommy, pompously. "This boat is going to Windport, and I am going to take it there. Tie him up, boys, and look after the deck hands. They must be around somewhere. Knock 'em over the heads if they make any trouble."

Thus saying, Tommy entered the pilot-house and seized hold of the wheel.

The boat was now out in the open lake, and although she had swung around a bit after Jack lost his grip on the wheel there was no particular danger in that.

Tommy possessed a little steamer of his own—undergoing repairs just now, as it happened—and as he had piloted her up and down the lake, he flattered himself that he was the "whole thing."

He immediately began to turn the boat so as to head her toward Windport.

Nina and the rest on the lower deck saw him twist the wheel this way and that, and each twist the black scowl on his freckled face grew blacker, and the boat continued to drift around.

"What's the matter, Tommy? Why don't you make her go?" Dr. McCloud called out in a joking way.

"If you don't understand your business, you young pirate, I'll come up there and teach you if you will pay me enough for the job," one of the Highport men shouted, and then there was a general laugh among the "prisoners."

Tommy was furious.

We regret to say he said things—real naughty things which we must really decline to print.

The trouble was that some wicked person had disconnected the rudder chain, and Tommy, although he had captured the pilot-house, had no more control over the rudder than he had before.

Just then the engine stopped.

"Start her up! What are you stopping for?" Tommy yelled down the tube.

But the boat did not start.

Jack, with his hands tied behind him, stood guarded by four of the Institute boys, and never said a word until Tommy, springing out of the pilot-house, made a rush for him, shouting: "What's the matter with the wheel? What have you done to it? Speak out, or we will chuck you into the lake."

"Oh, it isn't the wheel; it's the boy," retorted Jack. "What's the matter with you, Tommy? You've captured my boat, all right, but you don't seem to be able to make it go."

CHAPTER VI.

STILL BLUFFING.

Tommy Tyburn was "mad" enough to have carried out his threat to throw Jack Bradley into the lake then and there.

Perhaps he would have tried it, but just then a change came over the spirit of his dreams.

Suddenly two of the Highport gentlemen who had taken their capture so meekly whipped out revolvers, and "threw a bluff" at the boys.

"Back, there! Back, every one of you!" Captain Carley, the well-known lawyer, sang out. "There's going to be some bullets flying about now."

At the same instant Captain Hanks, Ned Trotter, the engineer, Charley Bright, George Thompson and Sam Fisher, all armed with stout sticks, suddenly appeared on deck, and made a charge for Tommy's crowd, whacking the boys right and left.

The whole thing was done so quickly that the Tyburnites were taken unawares.

Captain Hanks drove them down to the lower deck, where the sight of the "bluff" revolvers finished the business.

Of course Captain Carley and his companions had no intention of shooting anybody.

The Institute boys, however, could not be quite sure of that, and they ran aft like so many sheep, and were finally rounded up in the cabin with the two big doors shut and locked upon them, and the two captains on guard outside.

Of course Jack was released at the start.

Nina ran up on deck and attended to that.

Jack had planned the whole thing, and with the help of

Captain Hanks, who privately arranged matters with the deck hands and the Highport men, all worked like a charm.

"That's a good job!" cried Captain McCloud, after all was over; "and it will teach Tommy Tyburn a lesson, but how about our train, Jack? We have lost a lot of time."

"I know it," said Jack; "but don't you care, doctor. You'll get your train all right."

"I don't see how you figure it out, if you are going to make both wayports," replied the doctor. "I recognize the fact that it had to be, but it will cost me a lot of money if I don't show up in Chicago on time."

"If you don't it will be no fault of the Oneonta," cried Jack, giving Ned Trotter the starting bell.

Everything was all right for business again now, for Ned had returned to his post, and Charley Bright had connected the rudder chain.

"Can you do it, do you think, boy?" asked Captain Hanks, coming up to the pilot-house a little later on.

"Why, of course I can," replied Jack, "if you will only hustle at Sullivan and Hancock."

"You can depend upon me for that, but why not cut those stops out? There's no freight for either, and there are seldom up-lake passengers at either, as you know."

"I wouldn't do it for anything," said Jack. "Ned's got his orders. He'll crowd her for all she is worth. We are bound to make up our time."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the captain. "It was the slickest thing I ever saw, but all the same them fellers might have made us a lot of trouble if we hadn't been prepared."

"Of course they might, and no doubt would. How does Tommy take it, cap?"

"Mighty hard. He's saying things behind the door, and vowing vengeance on us all. What do you propose to do with them when we get to Highport, Jack?"

"Oh, let them go, I suppose."

Captain Carley says not, and Dr. McCloud fully agrees with him. That's pirate business, boy. It is a criminal offence."

"Oh, it's only a boy's freak. I'm out for business. I've not time to muss with a mere matter of revenge."

"I don't know. Perhaps you will have to if Dr. McCloud sticks to it. I suppose he is the real boss of this boat?"

"The boat is mine," said Jack, emphatically. "Dr. McCloud has never interfered with me, and he never will."

Dr. McCloud certainly offered no interference now, nor did any of the other Highport men on board the Oneonta—perhaps some of the others wanted their train.

Meanwhile Jack crowded his boat for all she was worth.

Fortunately, freight was light that day.

Ned Trotter put on all steam, and by the time they reached Sullivan they were only ten minutes behind.

There were ten barrels of apples for Highport here, and the way the deck hands ran them on was a caution.

There was also one train passenger, who kicked up a row about the boat being late, but Captain Hanks attended to that, and gave the fellow as good as he sent.

At Hancock Jack had picked up four minutes, but he dropped it all for there was a horse to be taken aboard, and a balky one at that, which had to be literally dragged over the plank.

"Take no chances, Jack!" called out Dr. McCloud. "Remember, I'd rather miss the train than to go to the bottom of the lake."

"That's all right," answered Jack. "We are not doing a thing more than we can easily do. Never you fear for the boiler, doctor. Ned knows just how much steam we can stand."

Once away from Hancock the Oneonta seemed to fairly fly, and Jack took a short cut between the shore and Crow Island, a dangerous thing to do on account of the shallows, but he came out all right, and finally rounded up at the wharf at Highport with six seconds to spare.

"Good for you! You have done nobly!" cried the doctor. "I'll see you the first of the week, Jack, and now let me advise you to leave Captain Carley to deal with Tommy Tyburn and the Institute boys. View it as you like, Senator Tyburn's conduct was most high-handed, and it would not surprise me a bit if he put Tommy up to that job."

"I'll do just as you say," replied Jack, and the doctor turned away, and with Nina was first ashore.

Jack now went below and met Captain Carley on the forward deck.

"Jack, I am going to have those fellows arrested," he said. "It will teach Senator Tyburn a wholesome lesson which he very much needs. I hope you won't interfere."

"I promised Dr. McCloud that I would not," replied Jack; "but if it was me I'd let them go. I don't think Tommy will ever try such a thing again."

"He better not where I am concerned, unless he wants to get into State's prison," replied Captain Carley. "I shall go right up to the police station now. Of course I don't intend to press the case, unless—Hello! Here comes the chief of the police himself. Wonder what he wants? Surely he can't have heard."

The chief came hurrying down the gang-plank with a paper in his hand, and walked right up to Jack.

"Sorry, Bradley," he said, abruptly, "but you will have to come with me. I hold a warrant for your arrest!"

CHAPTER VII.

SENATOR TYBURN SWEARS VENGEANCE AGAINST JACK'S BOAT.

"A warrant for my arrest?" exclaimed Jack, staring at the chief of the Highport police with a good deal of amazement. "On what grounds, I should like to know?"

"Assault and battery," was the reply. "Sworn out by telegraph by Senator Tyburn. He accuses you of striking his son with intent to kill."

"That's absurd!" cried Captain Carley. "I saw the whole proceeding."

"Can't help that, and I don't doubt your word, captain," said the chief; "but you know the law, if any one does. I have no alternative, I suppose?"

"No, you have none, of course. You'll have to go, Jack. I'll be on hand, and have the judge sit on your case at once. I stand ready to go bail for you to any amount; and now, chief, there are other arrests you'll have to make on this steamer. Some twenty-odd altogether. Don't stare! It's a fact. Among others, Tommy Tyburn, whom I accuse of committing an act of piracy on the high seas!"

This brought out a full explanation of the situation.

It was finally agreed with the chief that the Institute boys should be left where they were until Jack's case was attended to, and they all went up to Judge Thomas' office where the judge consented to hold court at once, and Jack was admitted to bail.

"I'll take the boys in the courtroom at one o'clock, after I've had my lunch," said the judge. "Do you propose to appear against them, captain? It's a serious matter. If you do appear I shall have to commit them, as you very well know."

"I shall appear, if I don't forget it," replied Captain Carley. "Meanwhile, let them have at least half an hour in a cell."

"Done," said the judge; "and I may make it longer. My dinner may be late. Say, captain, we shall have a terrible howl from the noble senator for this."

"Let him howl," replied Captain Carley. "That cub of a boy of his is getting off easier than he deserves."

All Highport was agog when the entire police force—it consisted of the chief and five members—marched in a body to Jack's boat.

The cabin doors were thrown open then, and the bold Tommy and his companion in crime were duly placed under arrest.

At first Tommy was disposed to resent the "outrage," as he termed it, and to make a good deal of noise, but a smart rap over the head with a policeman's billy soon brought him to his senses, and he marched to the county jail at the head of the line, followed by a hooting crowd of boys, who rejoiced in the situation, for the Tyburn Institute fellows were very unpopular in Highport on account of the airs they always put on when they came to town.

Jack did not go with them.

He had already given his sworn testimony in Judge Thomas' office to be used in case of necessity.

The Oneonta sailed at two, and it was a quarter past before the judge appeared on the bench and ordered the prisoners brought into court.

Captain Carley did not put in an appearance, so the case was dismissed.

As there was no way of getting back to Motford by water until the next day's boat, Tommy and his friends were obliged to hire teams at considerable expense and take the twenty-mile drive, which landed them at the Institute long after dark, with their nut baskets and bags quite empty, and the day's pleasure completely spoiled.

Jack sailed the Oneonta back down the lake with a good load of passengers and freight.

The snowstorm predicted by Captain Hanks did not materialize that day, but it came late the following afternoon.

All day the sky had been overcast and threatening, and about four o'clock, just after Jack left Sullivan on his down trip, it began to snow.

There were quite a number of passengers on the Oneonta that afternoon.

Among them were some of the heaviest business men of Lowport, who had been up to Highport to attend an exhibition of dairy products. It was a great butter and cheese country around Lake Rutherford.

There were also a good many Motford men who had been up to the fair and not a few from Dixport.

Jack rather expected to see Dr. McCloud back again, but when the western train pulled into Highport the doctor did not appear.

Sheriff Rustin did, however.

He had been attending the dairy fair, and was on his way back to Lowport, where he lived.

He was the center of a group of Lowporters, and did not approach Jack until after the boat left Windport. It was then snowing quite hard, and as the sheriff came across the hurricane deck he had his overcoat buttoned up about his ears.

"Jack, may I come in?" he said, tapping on the pilot-house window.

Jack opened the door.

"Phew! It's cold, isn't it?" said the sheriff, with a shiver. "Going to be a big storm, I'm afraid, Jack. Do you know that you have raised the very old mischief in Motford? I'm afraid it's going to lead to trouble for you, my boy."

"I suppose you refer to the arrest of Tommy Tyburn and the Institute boys," replied Jack. "It was not my doings, Mr. Rustin. That was Captain Carley's work."

"It don't make any difference. It's laid to your door, just the same."

"I don't see what right Senator Tyburn has to complain. He tried to put me out of business, and I turned the tables on him, that's all."

"He don't view it in that light. He swears vengeance. Of course I am on the outs with him now, and he was very angry when he gave me a piece of his mind on Westport wharf yesterday afternoon. He swore that he was going to put a boat right on the lake then, and I have learned since that he was simply furious when he learned of Tommy's arrest, and that this morning he telephoned Mr. Snider, the boat builder at Highport, to begin work on a steamer at once."

"Well, I can't help that," replied Jack, not showing how much disturbed he felt. "We have to take it all as it comes."

"You have to take Senator Tyburn any way he is pleased to offer himself," laughed the sheriff. "He's a mighty, big fellow in his own estimation, and he has money enough to allow himself the pleasure of doing whatever he pleases."

The sheriff remained in the pilot-house until the boat reached Motford.

Jack then went out to superintend the unloading of a lot of freight, for Captain Hanks had reported sick in the morning, and was not aboard that trip.

Senator Tyburn was on the wharf when the boat came in.

He wore a heavy ulster, and was marching up and down, his hands deep in his capacious pockets.

As soon as the steamer tied up he crossed the gang-plank, and came up to Jack with "blood in his eye."

"I suppose you think you got the best of me all around yesterday, young man," he said, with a sneer. "I suppose you are feeling rather large to-day, especially about the head?"

The senator's tone was most insulting.

Jack turned away and would have made no reply, but the big man from Motford caught him roughly by the shoulder and swung him around.

"Answer me, you young dog!" he snarled. "Don't you dare to turn away from me in that insolent fashion. Do you know what I mean to do for you?"

"Hands off, Senator Tyburn!" cried Jack. "I don't allow any one to pull me about. No, I don't know what you mean to do for me, and what's more I'm out for business, and have no time either to make threats or listen to them—that's me!"

"Out for business!" sneered Motford's magnate. "I'm going to put you out of business, boy, and don't you make a mistake. Within two months I'll have a rival steamer on this lake which will run your old tub into the boneyard. You have run up against the wrong man, Master Jack Bradley. I'll make you rue the day you ever struck my son."

Senator Tyburn had come on board the Oneonta on purpose to make these threats, and having made them he crossed the gang-plank and hurried up the wharf through the storm.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. BROWN.

Jack felt rather blue when he tied up at Dixport wharf that night, it must be owned.

The boat was all he had left in the world to depend upon, and to threaten to destroy its usefulness was to attack the boy in his weakest spot.

"It's going to be a tough night," remarked Ned Trotter, after the deck hands had all left.

Jack was walking up and down on the deck, thinking over the senator's threats.

"No doubt about that," replied Jack. "It isn't so very cold, though."

"No, but it's growing colder. I don't think I had better go home."

"On account of the fires in the morning, Ned?"

"Yes. It will be hard work to get up steam, and we want to be sure to start on time."

"Indeed, we do. I wouldn't miss a time connection just now for any money. I suppose you have heard of the attack Senator Tyburn made on me when we were at Motford wharf?"

"Yes; Charley Bright was telling me about it. The senator is a big stuff."

"That may be, but he's got the rocks just the same, and I have nothing but the boat. He swears he will put me out of business, and I'm afraid he will keep his word."

"Well, it's a blame shame, that's what," said Ned. "He's got all the dough he wants—more than he knows what to do with. Why can't he let a hard working fellow like you alone? But that's the way with them rich fellows. They do whatever they please. To get back to the fires, though, Jack. Don't you think I had better stay?"

"I think you had, if you are willing to, Ned, but I can't pay anything extra. I've got a big coal bill to meet this month, and there are several of my father's small debts I have promised to settle by the end of next week. I shall want every cent."

"As though I would ask it, Jack. I know the load you are carrying, and you've always been most liberal with me since you took hold here. I'd do anything in the world to help you out."

"It's awfully kind of you to say so, Ned. I think I'll stay with you. It gives me the horrors to go home now with not a soul in the big house but myself. I shall be glad when father's creditors take possession of the property. Then I shall just live on board all the time."

Ned went up into town and brought supper for two down in a basket from a restaurant, and he and Jack ate it in the engine room, where it was warm and comfortable.

Later in the evening Jack brought down two mattresses and bedding from the staterooms in the ladies' cabin, and made up beds on the engine room floor.

It continued to snow harder and harder.

By nine o'clock the wind began to blow, and the Oneonta did so much banging against the wharf that Jack was glad he had remained above, as he would have been obliged to come down to the boat in any case.

"You had better turn in, cap. I'll stand watch," said Ned.

"We'll take turns about," replied Jack, "and I'll stand first watch. You turn in right now."

As things were, it was quite necessary for some one to stand watch.

Jack took up his place inside the glass doors of the cabin on the lower deck, where he had a good view of the wharf, and could see if anything went wrong.

It was dreary work watching.

Jack was used to it, however, and he found no difficulty in keeping awake.

Just after midnight he went down into the engine room and woke up Ned.

"Hello! How are things now, cap?" cried the engineer, springing up. "Is the storm still on?"

"Worse than ever," replied Jack. "Looks as though it was never going to stop."

"Is she pounding much, Jack?"

"Yes, a good deal. Still I don't think there has been any damage done."

"Damage enough done to the business," said Ned. "There'll be no up-lake travel to-morrow, and mighty little coming

down. I'm afraid. I'll put on more coal, Jack, and then take my turn on deck."

Jack went back to his post.

He had scarcely reached it when he was suddenly startled by hearing a voice shouting outside in the storm.

Jack thought it was some one on the wharf. The snow was so thick that he could see next to nothing.

Throwing open the door, he hurried out just as the cry came again.

"Hello! Hello! Will somebody tell me where I am?" some one was shouting through the storm; the words could scarcely be heard above the howling of the wind.

The sound did not come from the wharf, however; it came from off on the lake.

"Who on earth can it be?" thought Jack. "Who can be out on the lake such a night as this?"

"Hello! Hello!" he shouted. "Do you hear?"

"I hear you," was the reply. "Where are you? I can't find my way. Are you on shore?"

"I'm on board the Oneonta, tied up at the wharf!" roared Jack. "Where are you?"

"I'm in a boat on the water!" was the answer. "I've been pulling across the lake, and I've lost my way!"

The sound of oars could not be heard.

"Keep on hollering!" the voice cried. Then in a minute it was: "I see the steamer. May I come aboard?"

"Sure!" replied Jack, and he continued to shout.

Just then Ned came up and joined him.

"What's all that yelling about?" he asked.

"Some one out in the storm. I haven't any idea who it is."

"He must be downright crazy, whoever he is. What do you suppose ever brought him out on the lake this time of night?"

"Give it up. We shall know when he comes aboard, most likely, and here he comes now!"

A small rowboat had come up alongside of the steamer, pulled by a large, heavy man with a black mustache.

"Throw me a line, boys!" he exclaimed. "Help me now, and I'll make it all right with you!"

Jack sprang to obey.

The line was thrown, and the boat made fast.

"Here, take those!" called the man, passing up two heavy grips which had laid in the bottom of the boat.

Ned reached down and got them.

Then the man, seizing hold of the deck, climbed up much more easily than one might have expected from a man of his size.

He was an entire stranger. Jack, who had a splendid memory for faces, felt certain that he had never seen him before.

Picking up the two grips he hurried in through the glass doors, which speedily shut out the storm.

"Who owns this steamer?" he demanded. "What place is this?"

"Why, it's Dixport," explained Jack, "and I'm the fellow who owns the boat."

"You? Why, you are only a boy."

"That may be, but I'm the boy who owns the boat."

"Are you the captain as well as the owner?"

"I am."

"I've just come over from Westport," said the stranger. "I'm a jewelry drummer. I drove down from McKean County. I intended to drive to Highport, where I have to take the first train for Chicago to-morrow morning. My horse, unfortunately, dropped dead just as I came into Westport, and I found it just impossible to hire another. They told me there was a steamer over at Dixport which I could get up the lake in, so I borrowed that boat and started over. It's a terrible night. It's a wonder I ever got here alive."

"That's what it is," replied Jack. "I think you had better stop right here until morning. I can give you a stateroom where you will be comfortable. We start at eight o'clock."

"No," said the man. "That won't suit me at all. Boy, what's your name?"

"Jack Bradley, sir. This is Ned Trotter, my engineer."

"I'm right glad to meet you both," was the reply. "My name is Brown—Ralph Brown. I travel for Spooner and Welsh, of Chicago. It's absolutely necessary for me to get that train to-morrow morning, boys."

"Why, it can't possibly be done," said Jack.

"I think it can," replied Mr. Brown, pulling out his pocket-book, from which he took a hundred-dollar bill.

"Do you see that, Jack Bradley?" he exclaimed, holding it up.

"I see it, of course," replied Jack.

"Well, boy, it's yours to earn," replied Mr. Brown; "and you'll earn it by running this boat up the lake right now and landing me at Highport in time to make my train!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE HOLD-UP IN THE STORM.

"Run the Oneonta out in this storm! Not if I know it!" cried Jack, amazed at the strange proposition of Mr. Brown.

"Why not?" asked the drummer. "Is it all the storm?"

"The storm is reason enough. Besides, I have my regular trip to make to-morrow."

"Do you think you could get to Highport in the storm?"

"I think I might if I tried, but I don't care to take the risk."

"What is the risk—going on the rocks?"

"Yes, of course."

"Still, you know the lake pretty well, I suppose? They told me so at Westport, at least."

"I don't think any one knows it any better. I've been cruising around it ever since I was able to handle an oar."

"I'll take the chances; you take the bill."

"I can't do it any way in the world, sir," replied Jack.

"Isn't the pay enough?"

"I don't think it is for the risk."

"Well, then, say what is. Money is no object to me."

"Oh, I wouldn't fix a price. I don't want to go at all."

"How would a hundred and fifty strike you?"

"Well, of course, it's a lot of money. Seems to me you are very anxious to get that train."

"I am. It's a matter of the utmost importance. You see, I have a chance to make a big sale in Chicago to-morrow if I can only connect with a certain party. The chance will slip me if I am not there on time. There is at least a thousand dollars in it, and I am willing to pay liberally for the accommodation, boy."

"Well, I'm out for business," replied Jack, strongly tempted; "but there's my regular trip. It will cost me business if I don't leave this wharf promptly at eight o'clock to-morrow morning."

Jack was wavering.

Ned knew it, and he now put in his oar.

"I think we might do it, Jack. By crowding her we could get back easy enough," he said.

"That's the talk! Crowd her, and I'll pay for it!" cried Mr. Brown, pulling out another hundred-dollar bill and shaking both before Jack's face.

"There you are, Jack Bradley!" he exclaimed. "Two of them! Yours in advance if you will take me up the lake."

"What do you say, Ned?" asked Jack. "If we do it, of course I should consider half the money yours, for it's running an almighty big risk."

"I'm willing to risk my life if you are willing to risk your boat," said Ned. "I say let's go."

It was a strong temptation to Jack. He needed money badly, for every cent made on the boat he had been turning over to his father's smaller creditors, and he felt that he would be justified in keeping this money for his own personal wants.

"Well, I'll risk it!" he exclaimed at last. "Hand over your money, boss."

"There you are!" said Mr. Brown, putting the two hundred-dollar bills in Jack's hands. "Now then, how long is it going to take to get steam up?"

"It's all up now, sir," replied Ned, as Jack passed him over one of the bills.

Ned's eyes were as big as saucers.

He had never had so much money at one time in all his life.

"Good!" cried Mr. Brown. "Good! Are there only you two fellows aboard?"

"That's all," said Jack.

"All right. I'll lend a hand. I'll help cast off, and I'll help steer. In fact, I'm willing to do any old thing. I don't mind working my passage one bit."

"You can help me with the lines," said Jack; "but I'll do my own steering. It will have to be done by compass, of course; we can't see a thing."

The start was made without further delay.

Jack and Mr. Brown cast off, and Ned hurried to his post.

Jack was at the wheel when Mr. Brown threw off the bow-line, and giving Ned the bell he drove the Oneonta out into the face of the storm.

Mr. Brown came right up into the pilot-house, carrying his grips.

Jack was rather annoyed at this, but he could not very well refuse to let him in.

He did not like the man altogether.

There was a dark, sinister look about his face, and a searching way of peering at you, which did not suit Jack.

The wind howled fearfully. The snow came sweeping about the pilot-house in great gusts. Jack almost wished that he had never undertaken the job.

"I don't know how we shall make it, sir," he said. "The risk is even greater than I thought it was."

"You don't think of going back, do you?" demanded the drummer, almost fiercely.

"I didn't say that. I only wanted you to understand."

"Oh, I understand fully. We don't go back, boy."

These words were spoken in a low, hissing voice which made Jack start.

"No," continued Mr. Brown. "We are going right on, and now I have an order to give. You will cross the lake."

"That's not the way to Highport!" cried Jack, beginning to feel seriously alarmed.

"You will cross the lake," continued the drummer, just as though he had not spoken. "and run into that little cove just north of Motford. I suppose you know where it is?"

"I know perfectly well where it is," replied Jack; "but I'm not going to risk my boat in among the rocks in that cove. My agreement was to carry you to Highport, and I stand ready to carry that out."

"Oh, but you are going there!" cried Brown, suddenly whipping out a revolver and pointing it at Jack's head. "You are either going there, Jack Bradley, or you are going to make an unpleasant acquaintance with this."

CHAPTER X.

JACK LAYS A TRAP FOR MR. BROWN.

It was a ticklish situation for Jack.

To say that he was not afraid would not be to speak the truth. He was horribly afraid; too much so to either move or speak; but after a minute, during which there was profound silence in the pilot-house, this feeling passed away.

"Well, what's your decision?" demanded Mr. Brown. "Have you nothing to say?"

"Is this a hold-up?" gasped Jack.

"Yes, if you choose to call it so."

"It's anything but a square deal. I'm ready to do as I agreed."

"Let up on that. You have nothing at all to say about it, boy. Are you going to steer me over to the cove?"

"I suppose I shall have to," replied Jack. Secretly he made up his mind that he would steer down the lake to Lowport and take his chances of getting help there.

"Right," said Mr. Brown, pocketing the revolver. "Now then, Jack Bradley, there's no call for us to be bad friends about this business. I only wanted to make you understand that I am in dead earnest. Things can go on between us just as they were before."

Jack said nothing for some moments.

Meanwhile he gradually turned the boat and headed for Lowport.

Mr. Brown did not appear to notice the change.

"What about it after we get to the cove?" asked Jack. "Do you leave me there?"

"Not much! After that you run the boat to Highport. I shan't detain you long at the cove; but, by the way, you might as well turn the boat around, Jack. Orders were to head across the lake and not to run down toward Lowport as we are doing now."

"What do you mean?" asked Jack, his fears returning when he found he was discovered.

"Business!" bellowed Brown, pulling out his pistol again and aiming it at Jack's head. "No fooling, boy! I have forgotten more about steering a boat by compass than you will ever know. Turn her about, I say!"

Jack obeyed.

Brown looked at the compass and then peered out through the window of the pilot-house.

"It's all right," he said. "We are going straight across now; keep away from Motford, though. Don't let any sudden freak send you in there."

This time the drummer did not put up his revolver, but kept it in his hand all ready for instant use.

"Well, are we most across?" he demanded at last.

"Almost, I think. I can't see anything at all."

"I'll go outside and have a look. We ought to be able to see the lights of Motford by this time, I should say."

He came back in a minute and reported that they were just entering the cove.

"Stop her now, Jack!" he exclaimed.

Jack gave Ned the bell and the steamer stopped.

Brown dropped the pilot-house window, and, putting his fingers into his mouth, gave a shrill whistle.

He repeated it twice, waited and then whistled again.

After a minute the answering whistle came from the shore.

"That's all right," said Brown, closing the window. "Start up again, now, and run on a little way."

Brown seemed to know all about it.

He conducted the Oneonta right into the cove and ran out and dropped anchor himself, bringing the boat to a standstill right off the "Billy Goat" just as if he had been aware that the big rock was there.

Jack made no further attempt to interfere with him.

Probably Brown thought that the boy had entirely given up all idea of fighting for his rights.

This, as we are about to show, was as big a mistake as the man ever made in all his life.

Jack was not that sort of a boy at all. He had been made a cat's-paw of, and he knew it.

He was bursting with rage, and, what was more, he felt grave doubts as to whether the two hundred-dollar bills paid him by Brown were good. He had never seen a hundred-dollar bill before and consequently had no idea how it looked.

"By gracious! he's fooled me, but I'll get square with him," thought Jack. "Just let him wait and see."

He improved the opportunity, while Brown was out dropping anchor, to call down through the tube to Ned and explain something of the situation.

Ned was furious, of course.

"What are you going to do about it, Jack!" he called back.

"Whatever I can," replied Jack. "Just you wait and see."

"What do you suppose it means?"

"Give it up. Some crooked business somewhere, you may be very sure."

Brown came back into the pilot-house just then, and, of course, the talk through the tube had to come to an end.

"Well, Jack, I'm going ashore," he said. "I've got two friends here waiting for me, and I propose to bring them aboard, for they want to go to Highport with me. I shall take the boat and bring them off. Don't you dare to lay a hand on that anchor or make any move to run away from me; if you do I shall kill your engineer, who goes ashore with me as a hostage—do you understand?"

"I hear what you say," replied Jack. "I suppose I shall have to do as you wish."

He would have given anything to have called out a warning word to Ned, but Brown was too quick for him.

"Come out of the pilot-house!" he exclaimed, planking the pistol at Jack's head.

There was nothing for it but to obey.

"Forward march to the engine room!" was the next order, and as Jack was walking ahead of his captor, Brown said:

"Now, young feller, you be sensible and no harm shall come to either you or your partner. All I want is to get to Highport with my friends."

"You take a queer way to get at it," said Jack. "If you had told me in the first place that you wanted to stop here I shouldn't have raised any objection."

"Yes, you would. No talk, now. This will soon be over, and you will find yourself with your boat uninjured and well paid for your pains."

There wasn't much fight in Ned Trotter, Jack knew that perfectly well.

He had already made up his mind what to do, and he determined to make every effort to carry it out.

"You'll have to go, Ned," he said. "There's no use trying to stand out against this man."

Of course Ned made some objections, and for a while tried to hold out against the drummer, but a few flourishes of the revolver brought him to terms and he went aboard the boat and pulled off into the storm, according to the way Brown directed.

Jack was now left alone on the steamer with a little time on his hands to act.

"I'll fix 'em!" he muttered. "There don't any man get the best of me this way. I'll show him what I can do."

Jack had a good Winchester rifle on board.

It was in the purser's office on the main deck.

Now there was no purser on board the Oneonta, and the

room was never used except when Jack wanted to be alone to figure up his accounts.

He hurried to the office and took the rifle out of the closet.

It was fully loaded and a fine weapon. His father had made him a present of it the year previous, for Jack used to be very fond of duck shooting—there was no time for that now.

Placing the rifle just inside the big glass, which cut off the main deck from the forward part of the boat, Jack got a stout rope and stretched it across the door on the inside, down close to the floor, making it fast at each end.

Besides this he prepared several smaller pieces of rope which he placed near the rifle.

"Now I've got 'em, by gracious!" he said to himself. "Let 'em come on. If there are not too many of them the game is in my own hands."

CHAPTER XI.

JACK FINDS HIMSELF MASTER OF THE SITUATION ONCE MORE.

Jack now went forward and stood, with the snow flying all around him, listening.

There was no sound of oars. The boat must have reached the shore, he thought.

Suddenly, as he listened, a wild cry rang out through the storm.

"Oh, don't leave me here! Don't leave me here! I shall freeze to death! I shall die! Oh! oh! oh! What shall I do? Oh, take me on board the boat!"

Jack was amazed.

He knew the voice.

He had for several years attended school at the Tyburn Institute and no one who had ever known Tyburn could possibly mistake his high-pitched, whining voice.

"Tommy over there! It can't be!" thought Jack. "And yet it certainly sounds like him."

"Shut your head or I'll come back there and put a bullet into you!" Brown's voice was heard to answer, and after that, save for the sound of oars, all was still.

To say that Jack was puzzled does not half express it.

He tried to make himself believe that he had been mistaken. Meanwhile the boat was rapidly drawing near the Oneonta.

Jack went inside, shut the glass doors and turned out the light which had been burning on the main deck, taking his stand in the corner of the partition and the right-hand door.

We neglected to mention that Brown, before going on board the boat, had thrown the two grips in and taken them ashore with him.

Whatever they contained Mr. Brown was evidently very careful of them, for he brought them back with him now.

"Hello, on board! Hello! Hello!" he shouted as he came up alongside.

Jack kept as still as a mouse.

Again and again the shout came, but Jack made no sign, keeping his place in the corner with his eyes against the glass, peering out.

Presently he saw a young man come up over the side.

He carried a dark-lantern in his hand and began flashing it about.

"Here, take my revolver, Jim!" Brown's voice called out. "You may need it. Throw us the line, I'll do the rest. Go down in the engine room and bring the boy up. Probably you will find him there."

The line was thrown and the young man, whose face could not be seen, flashing the lantern before him, moved toward the glass doors.

"Confound the lantern!" muttered Jack. "I'm afraid that's going to spoil it all."

"It didn't, though."

Jack had laid his trap well and he was all ready to spring it now.

Before the young man came aboard Jack had cautiously opened the door, leaving a space just wide enough to allow a man to pass through.

The young man, seeing the opening, hurried toward it and the next instant he was on his nose, the lantern flying out of one hand and the revolver out of the other.

"Hully gee!" he gasped, "what have I struck now?"

Jack was on the spot in an instant, stopping only to shut the door.

"Get up!" he exclaimed, giving the revolver a kick which sent it flying across the deck. "Get up or you're a dead man!"

The fellow scrambled to his feet, to find himself facing Jack's rifle.

"Don't shoot!" he gasped. "Don't shoot! What do you want me to do?"

"See that door!" said Jack, pointing to the purser's room. "Get in there or I'll blow off the whole top of your head!"

The young man lost no time in doing what he was told.

He was a slight-built, sickly looking fellow, and seemed to be terribly frightened.

Jack turned the key on him, got the revolver and jumped back into his old place, ready for the next victim of his trap.

"By Jove! that was immense!" he muttered. "I wonder how many more there are of them? Hello, there comes Brown!"

He had opened the door slightly as before.

Brown was just coming over the side.

He turned, and some one passed up the two grips to him.

With one in each hand he came hurrying toward the glass doors, evidently without the faintest suspicion that anything had gone wrong.

"Here comes No. 2," thought Jack. "I hope to gracious that I have as good luck with him as I did with No. 1."

He had better luck.

Brown had no lantern, and, of course, there was no chance at all for him to see the rope.

Down he went, striking his forehead with such force that he was completely stunned.

"Heavens! Have I killed him?" thought Jack, as he jumped on the man.

"All the same, I must take no chances," he muttered.

Seeing that Brown did not move, he seized a piece of the rope, tied his hands behind his back and then bound his legs together securely.

He found out that Brown was not dead before he had quite finished, for the drummer, coming to his senses, began swearing fearfully and vowing all sorts of vengeance.

"That's all right. Keep it up," retorted Jack. "Are there any more of you in the boat?"

"Hold on, Jack Bradley!" said Brown, suddenly changing his tone. "I own up. You have got me. It's tit for tat, I suppose. Where's Jim?"

"Safe from you and where he can't do any harm to any one else."

"Jack, will you listen to me just one moment?"

"Not half a second if you want to ask me to set you free," replied Jack. "If you have anything else you want to say, why, spit it out right now."

"How about my giving you a thousand dollars more to land myself and friends at Highport, boy?"

"Not for a million. Stay where you are till I get ready to talk to you," retorted Jack.

He went out on the forward deck then.

Leaving the rifle under the stairs leading up to the promenade deck, Jack slipped the revolver into the outside pocket of his coat and leaned over the rail.

There was a young man seated amidships in the boat, and Ned was astern.

Between them was an iron strong-box, with a handle. A clumsy affair, but apparently very secure.

"Oh, I say!" cried Jack. "Orders are, you should come aboard!"

"'Bout time!" growled the fellow. "I began to think I was to be left here all night in the storm. Who's to help with the safe?"

"That's on me," said Jack. "I'll let down a rope. It's heavy, I suppose?"

"Not so very. About a hundred pounds."

"All right; I'll be right with you. Ned, hadn't you better come aboard first and lend me a hand?"

"If I'll be let," replied Ned.

"Go on," said the young man, unsuspectingly. Then he added:

"Where's Brown?"

"In the engine-room, warming up."

"He takes blame good care of himself, all right. Go on, young fellow; I don't want to stop here all night."

"Stay where you are, Ned," said Jack, as Ned came aboard. "I'll be right back with the rope."

Before coming out, Jack had put a handkerchief into Brown's mouth to prevent his giving the alarm.

He provided himself with the rope and he and Ned hauled up the safe.

Be very sure Jack found a chance to whisper something of the situation in Ned's ear while this operation was going on,

and also to slip one of the short sections of rope into his pocket.

The safe was easily landed on deck and the young man quickly followed it.

"Where's your old engine-room?" he demanded. "My hands are almost frozen."

"Right ahead," replied Jack, pointing to the doors.

The young man went blundering on to meet with the fate of his friends.

Jack had pulled Brown out of the way and the fellow fell sprawling.

To jump on him and tie his hands was the work of a moment, and Jack did it, while Ned held him covered with the revolver.

The trap was well set and well sprung, and Jack Bradley found himself master of the situation once more.

CHAPTER XII.

JACK RESCUES TOMMY TYBURN FROM A BAD FIX.

"By thunder, Jack, you are a wonderful fellow!" cried Ned Trotter, admiringly. "Blame me if you haven't captured all three of them! I wouldn't have believed it could be done."

"I've done it," replied Jack, simply. "They are surely crooks of some kind; burglars, I guess. Who was that who hollered over there?"

"Some fellow they left behind them tied up in the old barn," replied Ned. "I'm sure I don't know who it was."

"What would you say if I told you it was Tommy Tyburn?"

"Pooh! Nonsense! It can't be possible."

"Just the same, it is, and I'll bet on it. Come on, Ned; our job is only half done. We have to get that other fellow tied up, too, and then we'll lock all three in the purser's room, run them down to Lowport and turn them over to Sheriff Rustin."

"And the fellow in the barn?"

"We'll get him, of course; but we must secure the prisoners first."

When the door of the purser's room was opened "Jim" came out as quickly as though he had been shot from a gun, but when he found himself facing a revolver and a rifle he surrendered without a word.

He was tied up like the others and all three were left stretched upon the floor of the purser's room, securely locked in.

Of course, Brown had a lot to say before this desirable result was accomplished.

His last offer was five thousand dollars.

Jack saw that Ned was strongly tempted to yield to this proposition, and he brought the matter to a speedy end.

"No!" he cried. "I tell you no! There isn't money enough in the whole world to buy me!"

Of course, after that Ned hadn't a word to say.

The next thing was to open the grips.

One was stuffed with money, stocks and bonds.

The other was filled with spoons and forks and other articles of silverware.

"They are burglars, all right," said Jack, "and I expect this stuff came from Senator Tyburn's house. I'm afraid Tommy is in the job, too. We'll soon know, however, for I'm going right over to the barn now."

Jack and Ned now boarded the boat and pulled ashore, carrying the dark-lantern with them.

It was Tommy Tyburn, sure enough.

They found him tied, hand and foot, and lying in a stall.

Tommy was terribly frightened.

He set up a regular boo-hooing when he saw Jack and Ned.

"Oh, don't leave me here, Jack! Don't!" he cried. "I shall freeze to death! I shall die!"

"Who's going to leave you?" replied Jack, cutting him free.

Tommy scrambled to his feet, trembling all over.

"Where are they?" he asked. "Oh, Jack, don't—don't—don't—"

"Don't what?" demanded Jack, giving him a shake.

"What's the matter with you?"

"Don't go back on me! Help me to—to—oh, boo! hoo! Boo! hoo!"

"If you think me mean-spirited enough to take revenge on you now that I find you in trouble you don't know me, Tommy," replied Jack. "I've captured those three fellows. They are on board the Oneonta, locked up in the purser's room at the present moment. Who are they? What have they done? What does it all mean?"

"They are burglars!" gasped Tommy. "They broke open my father's safe and carried off my mother's jewel box and all the spoons and forks. Oh, Jack, what shall I ever do? Father will kill me! Oh, boo! hoo! Boo, hoo!"

"Tommy, you've been drinking," said Jack. "I can smell it on you. How did you ever come to get in with these men?"

"Oh, I can't tell you! I can't tell you!" whined Tommy.

"He's half drunk now," said Ned. "Best thing we can do, Jack, is to take him home."

"Oh, no, no! I don't want to go home!" groaned Tommy.

"Father and mother have gone to Chicago, and all the servants but the cook are down at Lowport to a ball. I shall be alone in the house—I'm afraid!"

"We will take you and the stuff down to Lowport and turn you over to the sheriff," said Jack.

Tommy blubbered worse than ever at this and begged to be allowed to stay on the boat till morning.

Not a word of explanation as to how the burglary occurred would he give, although Jack pressed him hard while they were pulling back to the steamboat.

"We'll go to Lowport, anyway," declared Jack. "As for you, Tommy, make your mind easy. You can stay on board the Oneonta as long as you please."

Jack's plan was carried out.

Tommy was put to bed in one of the staterooms, and Ned and Jack, after raising the anchor, returned to their posts and ran the steamer down to Lowport, reaching the wharf a little after four o'clock.

Leaving Jack in charge, Ned went to Sheriff Rustin's house, and, rousing him out of bed, told what had occurred.

It did not take the sheriff long to call two good men to his assistance, and with them he hurried on board the Oneonta.

"Jack, what have you been doing now, boy?" he exclaimed, as the master of the Oneonta met him at the gangplank.

"Capturing burglars, sheriff," replied Jack. "They are all ready for you, sir."

"And the jail is ready for them. By gracious, Senator Tyburn ought to be very thankful to you. Ned has told me the whole business. I must wake up Tommy and get his story, too."

"I wouldn't, Mr. Rustin, if I were you," replied Jack.

"Wouldn't? Why not? What do you mean?"

"Why, Tommy is badly rattled. He don't want to tell his part in this transaction, and I think you had better question him in the presence of his father, unless you want to make an enemy of Senator Tyburn, and I don't think you do want that."

"I don't. I guess you are right," said the sheriff. "I'll take charge of the plunder and the prisoners and leave Tommy to you."

"Here's a hundred dollars that fellow Brown gave me," said Jack, turning over the bill, which the sheriff declared was perfectly good.

Ned gave up his bill, too, although much against his will, and a little later the sheriff turned his prisoners over to the jailer, taking the grips and the strong-box to his own house, while Jack ran the Oneonta back to Dixport and was right on hand next day to make his regular run.

Tommy did not show up until the boat touched the wharf at Motford, when he suddenly put in an appearance and sneaked ashore without saying a word to Jack.

Thus ended the strangest night ever passed by the young captain of the Oneonta.

Jack wondered what Senator Tyburn would have to say about it, but several days passed after the senator's return, and he never heard a word from the magnate of Motford, and it began to look as if he never would.

CHAPTER XIII.

A TELEGRAM FROM SENATOR TYBURN.

Of course, the one topic of conversation on the boat next day was the burglary at Senator Tyburn's house, for the news quickly spread in Dixport, Lowport and Highport, and, in fact, in all the ports along the lake; although Jack never said a word.

The rights of the story were not fully known when Jack went up the lake in the morning, but Sheriff Rustin came aboard at Lowport, on the return trip, with his fine team of grays, bound for Dixport, and intending to drive down in the evening.

Leaving his horses in charge of Charley Bright, the sheriff came up into the pilot-house to talk to Jack.

"Well, boy, I suppose you are aware that you did a pretty tall stroke of business last night," was his first remark.

"I don't know, sir," laughed Jack. "I'm out for business all the time, you know; that's my motto. In this case I simply did the best I could, and I don't exactly see how it's going to benefit me."

"If it don't, Senator Tyburn is the meanest man this side of California," returned the sheriff. "But you won't find him so. He'll surely do something for you, Jack."

"If he only won't do anything against me, that's all I ask," replied Jack.

"What did Tommy say when he went ashore?"

"Not a word, then or any other time. He just sneaked off like a whipped cur."

"He could hardly do otherwise," said the sheriff. "I have had a long talk with Master Tommy. I think I have the rights of the part he played. You see, Jack, that fellow Brown is a well-known crook; goodness only knows what his real name is. He has passed under so many aliases that I greatly doubt if he knows it himself; the others are mere boys, learning the business. They had been hanging around Motford for several days and were stopping at the Lake House. Of course, they cultivated the acquaintance of Master Tommy. That's what they were there for; they got him to playing cards and drinking wine in their room at night, so when Tommy finds himself in charge of the paternal mansion, what does he do but invite them home and put out a big spread. Well, I need hardly tell how it ended. They got Tommy full, and, letting Brown, or whatever his name is, into the house, quietly blew the safe and helped themselves to all they could lay their hands on. The little jewel safe or strong-box was made of steel and that they had to carry away with them. They took Tommy, too, so as to prevent him from giving the alarm."

"How did they get to the cove?" asked Jack.

"In the boat," replied the sheriff. "The first plan was to pull across the lake and capture the Oneonta, but it stormed so and the boat was so heavily loaded that this was not safe; so Brown came over alone. You know the rest. Senator Tyburn has been wired for and is expected back to-morrow. Oh, you will pull in a big reward on this thing, sure."

"If he will let me alone, that's all I ask," repeated Jack.

And as the days passed it seemed all he was likely to get, for the magnate of Motford never even so much as said thank you, which certainly did seem rather strange.

Meanwhile, work on the new steamer continued at Highport.

Every time he went up the lake Jack looked into Mr. Smith's yard to watch the progress of the boat.

It was about half as big again as the Oneonta and was certainly a very fine craft.

Christmas came, and at last Jack received some recognition for his services from Senator Tyburn.

It came in a letter which, upon being opened, was found to contain his father's note for \$2,000 marked "Paid," with the date of the big storm attached.

This was all.

There wasn't a line from the senator, not even a "thank you."

More than once the great man of the West Shore of Lake Rutherford had been a passenger on the Oneonta since the robbery, but he always managed to avoid Jack. As for Tommy, Jack had never seen him since the night of the storm.

Nina St. Cloud and her father were on board that day, and Jack happened to be with them when Charley Bright, who had been up to the post-office, handed him the letter.

"That's from Tyburn," said the doctor. "I know his handwriting. What does he say?"

"Nothing," replied Jack; "he simply sends me this."

"A check for \$2,000!" exclaimed Nina, mistaking the true character of the piece of paper, girl-like. "Oh, I am so glad for your sake, Jack!"

"Tut! tut! my dear; don't be foolish!" said the doctor. "That's no check. Your father's note cancelled, I suppose, Jack. Well, that's just like Tyburn. If all accounts are true, you not only saved his son's life, but saved him cash and jewelry amounting to something like fifteen thousand dollars, to say nothing of a lot of stocks and bonds, which, had they been destroyed, would have put him to great inconvenience and expense. At least he might have given you a few hundreds for yourself."

"I don't want his money," said Jack. "I wouldn't have received a cent from him, and I won't have this. I shall pay every dollar my father owes if his creditors will only give me

time. As for this note, it goes back where it came from, that's all."

"I wouldn't do that, Jack," said the doctor. "I have just learned that the life insurance company has finally refused to pay your father's policy, claiming that there is no proof of death. That leaves so much more on your shoulders, my boy. Better let this burden get off of them while you have the chance."

"No," said Jack, "I won't do it."

"Suit yourself. I must admit that I respect you for your decision, although I have advised against it. What do you propose to do about the insurance matter? Perhaps you have not been notified yet and have had no time to think."

"Yes, I was notified last week. I have already decided. Captain Carley has taken the matter in hand for me. He is going to bring suit against the company at once."

"Come, that's business! I like that."

"I'm out for business, sir. That's my motto, you know."

"And you will surely make a success of it in the end, Jack. Keep it up, my boy. Honesty, perseverance, hard work and self-respect are bound to tell in the end."

Next day Jack returned the note to Senator Tyburn, with a polite letter, declining to accept it and reiterating his promise to pay his father's debt in full if he was only given time.

To this note no answer came, and so the matter dropped.

Meanwhile, the three burglars came up for trial. They were promptly convicted and sentenced to the penitentiary, which was located at a lonely place two miles back of Sullivan.

The winter passed away, and as spring opened Jack found himself running to heavier business than ever before.

A large shoe factory had been started at Lowport, which brought him a great deal of profitable freight, and so regular had been the trips on the Oneonta all winter, which was quite different from what it had been when Captain Hanks ran the boat, that the passenger list greatly increased and fewer people drove up and down the lake than formerly.

Jack had managed to clean up between two and three thousand dollars during the winter over and above all expenses, including his own living.

Every dollar of this he divided among his father's creditors, giving each one share and share alike.

The new steamer had now been launched. She was christened the "Fairy," and Senator Tyburn made the launching a great occasion.

Jack carried a big crowd from Lowport and Motford up the lake to witness the ceremony. Senator Tyburn, his wife and Tommy were among the passengers, but not a word did any of the family speak to Jack.

Now the question came up as to who was going to run the new steamer, and there were all sorts of rumors afloat.

One morning in May, just as Jack was about to start out of Dixport, he received a telegram, which read as follows:

"Meet me at Smith's yard, Highport, twelve-thirty. Important. Don't fail. J. C. TYBURN."

Jack passed the dispatch over to Ned Trotter, who happened to be standing near.

"What in the world do you suppose that means?" exclaimed Ned. "Has the mean old hunk come to his senses? Is he going to do something for us at last?"

"Give it up!" laughed Jack.

"Shall you go? I suppose you will be just independent enough not to."

"You are entirely mistaken. This is business. I'm out for business. Of course, I shall go," replied Jack.

He did not let the telegram worry him at all, but all the way up the lake Jack kept wondering what Senator Tyburn could possibly want with him.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE REJECTED OFFER.

Jack made a first-rate run that day, and as there happened to be comparatively little freight at the way ports, he ran up against the Highport wharf ahead of time.

The Fairy lay a little way out on the lake. She was gaily decked with flags, and certainly did present a very handsome appearance.

Not only that, but Jack's keen eye showed him that her model was far superior to the Oneonta's.

That she would prove to be the faster boat of the two there could be little doubt.

There were quite a number of people on board, mostly

workmen, who were finishing the painting and clearing up generally.

Jack caught sight of Senator Tyburn's tall form towering among them.

The big man appeared to be very busy, and was ordering everybody about.

"Guess he has forgotten his appointment," thought Jack, "but I'll keep my end of it, just the same."

This was Jack all over. He was promptness itself, and exactly as the half-past twelve whistle blew at the car-wheel foundry he walked into the boat builder's yard.

Smith was bustling about, giving some directions about a new sailboat which was on the stocks.

"Ah, Jack!" he exclaimed. "Senator Tyburn wants to see you."

"I know it," replied Jack, "but he does not seem to be here."

"No, he is on board the Fairy. He left word that you were to pull out to the boat. You can take that skiff of mine. It isn't every one I'll lend my boats to, but I know you will take good care of it. By the way, Jack, what do you think of the Fairy? Isn't she a handsome boat?"

"She's a beauty!" cried Jack.

"That's what she is. Glad to see that you are not so narrow-minded that you can't see anything good in a boat that's bound to put you out of business. Ha, ha, ha!"

Smith seemed to be mightily pleased with his own remark.

"So you expect to put me out of business?" said Jack. "Well, perhaps; I think that remains to be seen."

"It don't have to be, Jack."

"No?"

"No. You speak Senator Tyburn fair, boy. He has a kindly feeling toward you."

"He ought to have."

"He has. Get out there. I'm curious to know what he wants of you. Ha, ha, ha! Stop and see me when you come back."

"There's something in the wind," thought Jack, as he pulled away from the wharf in the skiff. "Smith is grinning like a Cheshire cat. Wonder what it all means? I shouldn't be surprised if old Tyburn was going to try to buy my boat."

The Senator came forward to meet Jack as soon as he appeared on deck.

"Ah, young man, you are prompt, I see!" he exclaimed. "I like that. I suppose you are feeling rather hard toward me?"

"Not at all, sir," replied Jack. "Why should I?"

"Well, you did me a big service last winter and I never even said thank you for it."

"I only did my duty. I don't want to be thanked for doing that."

"Come, that's sensible!" exclaimed the Senator. "I like that. It agrees with my ideas exactly. I always make it a point never to make any fuss over a person for merely doing their duty. Of course, you were entitled to a reward, and I offered you one, but you saw fit to reject it with scorn."

"Not with scorn, sir. Business is business. You lent my father two thousand dollars and I promised you I would pay it as soon as I was able. I shall do so. I do not wish to have the account wiped out in consideration for any little favor I may have rendered you or your son."

"Good! That's manly independence, and I like it. Jack Bradley, there need be no hard feeling between us, I think."

"There's none on my side, sir, I can assure you of that."

"Nor on mine. Now, boy, your favorite saying is that you are out for business, and I have a few business questions to ask you. First of all, what do you think of my new boat?"

"She's fine, sir."

"And fast. Her trial trip proved that."

"So I heard."

"Not much chance for the Oneonta when the Fairy is put on the lake, Jack. Have you ever thought of that?"

"It's coming," thought Jack. "He is going to make me an offer for my boat."

But he had the wrong pig by the ear, as he very soon found out.

"Yes, I have thought of it, of course," he replied. "I shall try my best to hold my own. I'm not altogether without friends."

"Friends don't count in business, boy. It's money that talks. Time is money and if the Oneonta can't make the time that the Fairy can you won't be in it in a month."

Thus saying, Senator Tyburn screwed up one eye and looked hard at Jack.

There was more truth than poetry in his remarks, as the young captain of the Oneonta very well knew.

"What is all this talk leading up to, Senator Tyburn?" asked Jack. "I don't quite understand."

"I suppose not, but you shall. Now, Jack, how would you like to be master of the Fairy?"

"Sir!" gasped Jack, in amazement, for he had never thought of this.

"Oh, I mean what I say. I am not altogether ungrateful, Jack Bradley. This is your reward for what you did for me that stormy night. I am prepared to make you a regular offer. I'll give you two dollars a day to run my boat and make a contract with you for a year."

Jack was more amazed than ever.

Could this man really suppose that he would accept any such paltry sum?

"What about my boat?" he asked, with as much calmness as he was able to assume.

"You can tie her up for the present. Later, if we can develop sufficient business for two boats, I will lease the Oneonta. I have thought of that, but it is too soon to talk about it yet."

"Senator Tyburn, do you know how much I have been making out of the Oneonta this winter?" Jack asked.

"Haven't the faintest idea. What do you claim?"

"An average of twenty dollars a day, over and above all expenses."

"No!"

"Oh, but I have. For me to tie up my boat and accept two dollars a day from you to run the Fairy would hardly be good business, the way I am situated. Don't you see it so?"

"Come," exclaimed the Senator; "I am under obligations to you, Jack. I don't want to be mean. I'll do better than that. I'll make it two and a half a day. There, now, what do you say to that?"

"That I respectfully decline your offer, sir. I couldn't think of such a thing for an instant."

Senator Tyburn's face grew dark.

"What do you mean, boy?" he demanded, in his most insolent fashion. "Do you realize just what you are saying? You don't seem to understand that it lies entirely in my power to put you out of business altogether, and that I intend to do that very thing unless you join forces with me."

"I understand the situation perfectly, sir," replied Jack, firmly. "If that is all you have to say to me, I'll go."

"Jack, you are making a fool of yourself. I don't want to hurt you, boy."

"That's what you have threatened me with, sir."

"Come; I'll make it three dollars a day. You can't possibly hope to earn over a dollar and a half after I've run your boat off the lake."

"No, sir," replied Jack, "not at all. I'm out for business and I think I can do better by sticking to my present business than by accepting your offer. Can you object to that?"

"I don't want to crush you, Jack."

"So you said before, and yet you are planning to do that very thing, Senator Tyburn."

"Then we can't come together?"

"Not on any such terms."

"Make me an offer, Jack. I'll take it into consideration. By the way, I neglected to tell you that my son Thomas will be nominally captain of the Fairy. He is growing restive at school and the discipline will do him good. You would figure as pilot and be subject to his orders at all times. Now, Jack, be sensible and make me an offer. If three dollars a day won't hire you, say what will."

"Nothing!" replied Jack, growing "hot under the collar" at this latest piece of impertinence. "I don't care to play second fiddle to your son, Senator Tyburn. I tell you that, plump and plain."

"Why, you impudent young beggar, what do you mean?" roared the Senator, giving way to his bad temper at last. "You ought to consider it an honor to work under my son. Be off with you! I have no further use for such a fool as you!"

"Thank you, sir," replied Jack, backing away. "Your money may be able to buy some people, Senator Tyburn, but I want you to understand that it can't buy me. I'll stick to my boat!"

CHAPTER XV.

JACK FINDS HIMSELF UP AGAINST THE RIVAL BOATS.

Not until Jack was in the skiff, pulling away, did Senator Tyburn reply to this last remark.

He seemed to be trying to control himself, and he succeeded

In part, for his voice was steady when he leaned over the rail and called out:

"So be it, Jack Bradley. It is you, not I, who have declared war, and it is going to be war to the knife until I have put you out of business—understand?"

"Well, is it the captain of the Fairy?" demanded Mr. Smith, coming up to Jack after the skiff had been made fast.

"No; it's the captain of the Oneonta, and don't you forget it!" answered Jack.

"You're a fool!" cried the boat builder. "That's what you are, boy—simply a fool!"

"Perhaps," replied Jack. "I've been told that before to-day, but nevertheless I shall stick to my old boat."

The Oneonta ran down the lake, with a full load of passengers and lots of freight that day, and business remained good all the week.

Dr. McCloud fully approved of Jack's course when he heard the story.

"Look here, Jack," he said, "I'll back you up to the tune of \$5,000. If Tyburn cuts prices, meet him. Let me advise you now to cut off Motford from your run. The Fairy will do all the business there, anyhow, and by doing away with that landing you can counteract her greater speed to a certain extent."

"I'll think it over," replied Jack. "I have also another scheme."

The following Monday morning was a memorable one for Jack, for on that day the Fairy began her regular trips on Lake Rutherford.

Her beginning was advertised with a big flourish of trumpets.

The program was to start her from Motford, run first to Lowport, then to Dixport, and so on up the lake, touching at all the ports made by the Oneonta.

As the distance from Motford to Lowport was less than from Dixport down to the bottom of the lake, the new boat was scheduled to leave Lowport ten minutes earlier than the Oneonta, while the Dixport people had the privilege of lying in bed a little longer. The time of arrival at Highport was the same with both boats and so were the fares and the freight rates, this last being much to Jack's relief.

The first day the Fairy was to be free to everybody and the Motford brass band was engaged to play during the trip.

The Fairy had a full crew, all engaged in Highport. A man by the name of Bissel had been engaged as pilot, and Tommy Tyburn was advertised as captain.

Bissel was a good enough fellow, and knew the lake. He had at one time been pilot of the Oneonta, but Colonel Bradley had been obliged to discharge him for getting drunk and absenting himself from his post.

Well, Monday came, and then the fight began.

Jack got all the Dixporters, and there were quite a number of passengers, including Dr. McCloud and Nina, who had arranged to go up the lake just for the trip.

The Oneonta started on time, as usual, and as Jack ran down the lake all hands crowded to the starboard rail to watch the new boat, which, with flags flying and band playing, was working her way down on the other side.

"Bet you five to one she beats us out of our boots!" cried Mr. Gropher, the cattle trader, who stood near the pilot-house on the hurricane deck.

"I'll take that bet," said Dr. McCloud, who had been having some little private talk with Jack. "It's on our arrival at Highport, of course?"

"Of course. I don't mean anything else," replied Gropher. "Anybody can see with half an eye how it is going to be. Why, she is beating us now."

"Anybody else want to bet?" called out the doctor. "I'll take all that's offered, on the same terms."

Nobody else was inclined to bet, and the Oneonta ran on to Lowport, meeting the rival steamer about a mile from the wharf.

She was crowded with passengers, who set up a derisive shout as the two boats met.

Tommy, with gold lace on his cap and wearing a brand-new uniform, was strutting about the hurricane deck, while his father stood near the pilot-house.

It was evident that the Fairy had captured all the Lowporters. Not a soul could be seen on the wharf.

"Good-morning, Senator!" roared Dr. McCloud, making a speaking trumpet of his hands. "That's a fine boat you've got there, but I'll bet you a thousand dollars to five hundred that we will beat you into Highport, just the same."

Now, as a rule, the doctor was not a betting man, but Sena-

tor Tyburn, on the contrary, was noted for his sporting proclivities.

"I'll take you up on that!" he shouted. "It's a go!"

"Done!" said the doctor, and the Fairy swept past them, the band playing away for all it was worth.

"Don't leave me on this, Jack," said the doctor, coming up to the pilot-house window. "I'd like nothing better than to take \$500 out of the pocket of that pompous ass, but I don't want to drop a thousand, boy."

"Trust me, doctor," replied Jack, as he turned in toward Lowport wharf.

There were no passengers at Lowport, and but little freight. The new boat had captured all.

At Motford it had made a clean sweep, as was to be expected, and there was nothing left for the Oneonta.

Jack made Westport first and got the freight, but the few passengers who were there waited for the new boat.

Now they passed the Fairy again on their way across to Sullivan and once more they met her after she left Hancock. At eleven the two boats met for the fourth time.

All the way ports had been made now and it was a straight run up the lake, with the Fairy a good half-mile in the lead, and yet Jack leaned out of the pilot-house window and said to Dr. McCloud:

"Your money is all right, doctor. Never you fear!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THROUGH THE GOOSENECK.

"By thunder! What's that crazy fellow about?" cried Pilot Bissel of the Fairy, looking back at the Oneonta, which was a good half mile behind.

"Crazy! I should say he was crazy!" shouted Tommy. "No one but a lunatic would ever think of such a thing!"

"He's going to do it, all the same, and it's my opinion he will make a hole in my pocketbook to the tune of a thousand dollars," said Senator Tyburn, who had a handsome field glass turned upon the Oneonta. "The boy is a perfect dare-devil, but he always gets there in everything he undertakes."

"If he can do it, we can!" cried Tommy. "We'll show him next trip."

"Much good that will do me," replied his father. "I was a fool to bet with McCloud. I might have known there was some trick about it. My goose is cooked. Ha, ha, ha!"

Senator Tyburn had an odd way of laughing when things went wrong with him.

Pilot Bissel, thinking to toady him, laughed, too, exclaiming: "Cooked by the Gooseneck! Ha, ha, ha!"

"What do you mean?" flashed the Senator. "Do you think it's a joke to lose a thousand dollars? Pity you don't know the lake as well as Jack Bradley does."

Bissel sobered down immediately.

"I beg pardon, sir," he said. "I was laughing because the Oneonta is sure to go on the rocks. I guess we won't be troubled much with her after to-day."

"Don't you think she can make it?" asked Tommy eagerly. "I don't believe she can myself."

"I'm sure she can't," replied Bissel.

"She'll do it, but we can't," said the Senator. "We draw altogether too much water, but something will have to be done. If it costs me my last dollar I am bound to run the Oneonta off the lake."

All eyes were now fixed upon the Oneonta except the pilot's; he did not dare to look around after the way Senator Tyburn had jumped upon him.

Jack had attempted a bold move, and no mistake.

At this part of the lake a large island took up half its width, and it was necessary, owing to shallow water, to stick close to the channel, which happened to lie well in towards the island.

Thus the usual course of the Oneonta had been to follow the island around, so to speak, a distance of about two miles.

There was only one alternative, and that was sometimes adopted by sailboats, and always by those who rowed up the lake.

It was to follow a narrow, tortuous channel, called the "Gooseneck," which ran between the island and the shore.

More than once Jack had taken the Oneonta through the Gooseneck.

It cut a full mile and a half off the run.

At one time he thought seriously of doing it as a regular thing, but as it made the passengers nervous he abandoned the idea.

To shoot through the Gooseneck was what Jack was about to attempt now.

"You are sure of your ground, Jack?" asked Dr. McCloud anxiously, as the Oneonta entered the narrow pass.

"I'm sure of my water, and that's more to the point," replied Jack, giving his wheel a twist.

"I wouldn't for the world have anything happen," continued the doctor. "If we were to endanger the lives of these passengers to help out my bet I should feel pretty cheap."

"Never fear, sir," replied Jack; "but I can't talk now. I've got all I want to do to attend to my wheel."

The passengers on the Oneonta took the matter quite seriously, and there was many an anxious face as the boat went swinging this way and that, following the windings of the channel.

But Jack knew what he was about.

He felt perfectly certain that he could shoot the Gooseneck, and he did it.

In a few moments the Oneonta was out on the lake with a straight run to Highport ahead of them and the Fairy not in sight.

Rousing cheers went up from the lower deck.

"Good enough, Jack!" cried Dr. McCloud. "That's five hundred dollars in my pocket, and I'll tell you what I shall do with it. Tyburn shall endorse it on your father's note."

"No, no!" said Jack. "You have won the money. Keep it. I want no help from anyone to pay the note," but Dr. McCloud, although he said nothing further, had his way.

The Oneonta rounded up at Highport wharf ten minutes ahead of the Fairy.

Worse still for the success of Captain Tommy's first trip, Bissel had some difficulty in making his landing, having never handled so large a boat before, and by the time the passengers got ashore the train had gone, leaving an angry crowd behind on the wharf.

The senator was furious.

"You lose your job if this thing occurs again," he said to Bissel. "We shall have to run through the Gooseneck, too."

"I'm afraid it can't be done, sir," replied the pilot, anxiously. "We draw more water than the Oneonta. Before we try it I shall have to make soundings. Of course you don't want to damage your boat."

The soundings were duly made, and it proved that Bissel was right. The Fairy could not shoot the Gooseneck except at higher water than Lake Rutherford usually carried, but the Oneonta could, and did.

During the days that followed Jack was invariably in at Highport a few minutes ahead.

Of course something had to be done.

To leave Motford any earlier would necessitate leaving Lowport correspondingly earlier, and Senator Tyburn was well aware that the passengers from that large and flourishing town would not like that, so he cut off Dixport entirely, and managed to crawl into Highport ahead.

It was Jack's turn to move now, and he cut off Motford, which gave him just the advantage he wanted.

Still Jack found that he was losing ground.

The passengers preferred the new and finer boat, and after a week or so most of them began to travel on it, leaving the Oneonta out in the cold.

Jack was discouraged, and no wonder.

He still carried a large part of the freight, but at last there came a day when he began to lose that.

First it was the shoe factory which withdrew its patronage, then the nail works followed suit, and inside of another week every large shipper did the same thing.

"Tyburn is giving them rebates," declared Dr. McCloud. "That's what's the matter. The time has come to make a cut, Jack. It's all you can do."

"It's a rainous way of doing business," said Jack.

"I know; you are out of business, and you must have it. If you don't get it you are gone."

So Jack came out with handbills announcing a general reduction of fare and freight charges.

It did no good.

Within twenty-four hours Senator Tyburn had his handbills out meeting the cut.

"Cut again," said the doctor. "Make him sick. I'll back you up, boy!"

"It's no use," replied Jack; "but I'll do it. Senator Tyburn will meet me at every turn."

It was just as Jack said.

Each cut was promptly met.

"You might just as well give up the fight now as any other time, Jack Bradley," said Senator Tyburn, meeting Jack one day on Highport wharf. "I told you it was to be war to the

knife between us. You stand no more chance of coming out of the fight alive than you have of flying to the moon."

And, indeed, it looked so, and probably would have proved so but for an occurrence which changed the whole state of affairs, and which we shall now proceed to relate.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE STORM ON THE LAKE.

"Did you hear the news, Jack?" exclaimed Ned Trotter, as Jack came on board the Oneonta one morning late in July.

"No. What is it?" asked Jack.

"There's been an escape from the penitentiary. Half a dozen convicts got out last night, killing two of the keepers while they were doing it. That fellow Brown was one of them, so I heard."

"That's a bad job," replied Jack. "I wish I could escape, Ned."

"You mean from this bad business we are running to of late?"

"Yes; if something isn't done soon I'll have to give up."

"I don't suppose you are making a dollar, Jack?"

"Making? I'm losing to the tune of twenty-five dollars a day. There's no fun in that, boy. I'm out for business, and if I don't get it soon I shall give the boat up and paddle off somewhere else."

"Where do you think of going, Jack?"

"Oh, I don't know. I haven't thought yet."

"I shall be most awfully sorry to see you go, but I can well understand that there is no business for you in keeping this fight up. Senator Tyburn is bound to down you in the end."

"I'm afraid there's more truth than poetry in that," replied Jack, as he went about his work.

It was a tremendously hot day, the fourth of its kind, with no signs of a break.

The Oneonta started out of Dixport with sixteen passengers, including Nina McCloud and a gay party of ten young girls, all bound for Frog Island, where a picnic under the auspices of the Methodist churches of Motford, Lowville and Dixport was to be held.

When they passed the Fairy coming up the lake Jack saw, as he had expected, that she was crowded with picnickers.

Of course this meant a stop at Frog Island, which was on the east side of the lake above Sullivan; in fact, almost up to Highport.

It had been talked of for some weeks, and as an accommodation to the picnickers the Fairy had been advertised to delay her start from Highport until five o'clock, so as to call at Frog Island and bring the people home.

Jack advertised the same thing for the Oneonta, of course.

It was rather disconsolate to look over at the Fairy, with her gay party of more than a hundred, and then to glance about the deck of the Oneonta at a few passengers scattered here and there.

There wasn't a soul to come on board at Lowport, and only a few barrels of potatoes in the way of freight.

Jack drove ahead to Westport, picking up one man there, and then started across to Sullivan, where there was nobody at all.

"Shall you take the Gooseneck as usual, Jack?" asked Nina, coming up to the pilot-house.

"Why, I shall have to if I want to make any time at all," replied Jack. "We are ahead of the other on account of her big load. The water is so low that over on this side of the lake it is positively dangerous. There is nothing for it but to shoot the Gooseneck or hug the island all the way around."

The passage was made as usual, and Jack landed his picnickers on Frog Island ahead of the Fairy, and was well on his way to Highport when the larger steamer reached the picnic wharf.

"There'll be rain before night," remarked Captain Hanks, who was on board that day. "I look to see some of them gals get their white dresses sp'iled."

Jack hardly agreed with Captain Hanks, but toward five o'clock he was bound to admit that the old man was probably right.

Dark clouds began to gather in the west, and a strange, greenish look overspread the sky.

"I wish the time was up," said Jack to Captain Hanks.

"I'm afraid there is going to be a serious storm."

"You bet! It will blow like the very Old Scratch," replied the captain. "Still we can't leave before our time."

Tommy Tyburn had stopped at Frog Island to enjoy the picnic, leaving Bissel to take the boat up the lake.

About quarter to five the passengers began to come down

the wharf. Jack got seven or eight, and the rest, some fifteen or so, went on board the Fairy, which lay on the other side of the wharf.

"I don't see anything of Bissel, do you, Charley?" remarked Jack to Charley Bright.

"Well, I saw him up in town about half an hour ago coming out of Struss' saloon, and he was pretty comfortably jagged," replied Charley.

"You don't mean it. I heard he hadn't drank a drop since he took charge on the Fairy."

"Well, he had been drinking all right to-day, then. I suppose it is because he hadn't Tommy to look after him. There he comes now."

Sure enough, Bissel was just coming down the wharf.

He walked very fast, and tried his best to walk straight, but Jack could see that he wobbled a little, for all that; still he took his place at the wheel all right, and seemed quite able to manage things when the boat started out.

Of course the Oneonta had no show at all light loaded on a straight run.

Jack did not crowd her on the run down to Frog Island, for it was simply no use.

By the time he reached the island the picnickers had all crowded aboard the Fairy, and even the passengers Jack expected to get were not on hand.

Jack was surprised. There was no one left on the wharf. The Fairy was just pulling out, with Tommy himself at the wheel. Jack learned afterward that when he found that Bissel had been drinking there was a big row, and the pilot had been ordered below and went.

"Hello, on board the Oneonta!" shouted Tommy in his loftiest tone.

"Hello!" cried Jack.

"I've got your passengers!" bawled Tommy. "It looked so much like rain they wouldn't wait for you. I'm going to stop at Dixport this trip. You may as well go right home."

"All right," called Jack, good-humoredly. "Don't you want me to send a man aboard to help you steer?"

This retort made Tommy furious.

"You attend to your own affairs, and I'll attend to mine!" he roared out, as he started across the lake.

Jack followed on, making no attempt to catch up with the faster boat.

In fact he wanted to give her time to get out of the way so that he could make his run to the Gooseneck, but to his surprise Tommy drove her straight for the entrance to the Gooseneck himself.

"What in thunder is the boy about? Is he crazy?" Captain Hanks exclaimed.

"If he is going to try to shoot the Gooseneck with that load aboard he is crazy," replied Jack, anxiously.

He was thinking of Nina, and, besides, feeling not a little hurt that she should have gone on the Fairy, and he was greatly worried about her now, for he knew Tommy to be perfectly reckless, and it was only too apparent what he meant to do.

A vivid flash of lightning, followed by a rattling peal of thunder, prevented further conversation.

The storm was now right upon them, but as yet there was no wind.

"She's a-comin'!" cried Captain Hanks, "and she's going to be a buster. Shan't I get in them awnings, Jack?"

"I wish you would," replied Jack. "You see you were right, captain. There he goes! Tommy is going to try and shoot the Gooseneck. He'll never get through in the wide world!"

Three minutes later the storm broke over the lake with terrific force.

It grew so dark that Jack could scarcely see a dozen yards ahead of him.

"We will have to shin around the island!" he exclaimed. "As for Tommy in the Gooseneck, I count him as good as lost!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

TOMMY FINDS HIMSELF UP AGAINST TROUBLE.

No such storm had ever swept over Lake Rutherford within the memory of man.

During the next ten minutes Jack Bradley had all he wanted to do to keep the Oneonta safe, for what with the shallows on the east side of the lake on one side of him and the island on the other, and the wind blowing up the lake at a speed of more than a hundred miles an hour, the danger was very great.

With great exertion Jack managed to hold the steamer in the channel.

The real danger came when they turned the point of the island, for then they got the wind full force.

Luckily the worst was over by that time.

The storm passed over with great rapidity, and a few moments later the sun was shining again, and it was hard to believe that the blow had ever been.

"By gracious, Jack, we came out of that lucky!" exclaimed Captain Hanks. "I wonder how it fares with the folks on the Fairy? They got it rather tough, I'm afraid."

"I'm afraid they did," replied Jack. "I'm terribly worried about them, Captain. I'm going over to the Gooseneck to see what has become of them. Get down and explain to the passengers. Hark! What was that?"

"A whistle, by gracious!" cried Captain Hanks. "She's in trouble, all right, Jack."

"I was afraid of this," said Jack. "There it goes again. Tommy has made a botch of it. He's calling for help, sure!"

From his position in the pilot-house Jack could look along to the Gooseneck, and now as he turned the steamer in that direction he saw the Fairy suddenly emerge from the narrow pass.

She lay all over to one side, and had sunk deep in the water.

Tommy was tooting his whistle for all he was worth.

"By gracious, she has knocked a hole in her bottom!" cried Captain Hanks.

Without replying Jack rang for greater speed, and bore down upon the wreck.

As he drew nearer he could see that there was the greatest confusion on board, and as each moment the boat seemed to sink lower in the water there was evidently no time to be lost.

"Fairy, ahoy! Hello, on board the Fairy!" shouted Captain Hanks, as they drew near. "What's the trouble? Hello!"

"We are sinking!" roared Tommy. "Oh, Jack, come alongside and get these people off!"

Tommy was badly rattled, as well he might be, for it was only too evident that the Fairy was bound for the bottom of the lake.

"Run her out of the channel, Tommy," Jack shouted. "Get her into shallow water just as quickly as you can!"

Tommy turned toward the island, and Jack bore down upon them on the outside.

It was a ticklish piece of business, for the Fairy had now sunk below the guards.

Jack came as close as he could, and both boats stopping a plank was thrown across, and the passengers came flocking aboard.

Jack watched for Nina, but seeing nothing of her thought he must have missed her in the crowd.

The last of the picnickers had scarcely come on board the Oneonta when the Fairy sank to the bottom, leaving only her upper deck out of water.

Tommy stuck by his wheel and, in fact, showed more calmness than Jack supposed he possessed.

"It's all my fault," he called over to Jack. "I was crazy to try to shoot the Gooseneck, and I did it. We went on the rocks before we were half through. I managed to get off again, but I guess everything is pretty badly ripped up. It will be some time before the Fairy bothers you again, Jack."

"I'm real sorry for it," replied Jack.

"Yes, I guess you are—nit!" returned Tommy bitterly. "Well, I'm sick of the boat, anyhow. I shall never run her again."

"Aren't you coming aboard?" asked Jack. "Everyone is off now, even to Bissel, who was carried off dead drunk. He's a nice pilot, Tommy. After all, it was he who put you in the hole."

"I put myself in the hole," replied Tommy. "I can't come aboard. I want to see you, Jack. Can't you throw down a plank and come over here?"

"Why, of course I can," said Jack; "but I don't like to leave my wheel. Why don't you come right aboard? What's the use in staying there?"

"I'll tell you when you come over here. Come on, now, it won't take but a minute. It's very important, Jack."

"I'll stand by the wheel," said Captain Hanks. "Jack, you had better go."

The plank was thrown across from one deck to the other, and Jack hurried on board the Fairy.

"Jack," whispered Tommy, coming out of the pilot-house, "I know my father has not used you right, but I know you are a good fellow, and I'm sure you won't refuse to help me."

"I'll do everything I can, Tommy, but, of course, I've got to look after these people first. What's in the wind?"

Tommy came closer and whispered something in Jack's ear.

"You don't mean it!" exclaimed Jack. "Well, Tommy, you have troubles of your own."

"Yes, it's true," said Tommy, bitterly. "Nice situation, isn't it? If it gets talked about there'll be the deuce to pay. Come back in your sailboat, Jack, and help me out, for heaven's sake. I'll never forget it of you, and I promise you faithfully that there shall be no more trouble made for you. I shall see that father does the right thing."

"All right," said Jack. "I'll come."

"Alone?"

"Yes. It will be near midnight before I can get here, though, unless I can have help to sail the boat. Let me bring Charley Bright along?"

"Do you think Charley can be depended upon to keep his mouth shut? I know you can."

"Oh, I think so. We will make him promise. Now, mind you, Tommy, I'm not doing this for any reward, and I don't want any talk about that. I am just doing it to help you out."

"And it will help me out," replied Tommy. "You're a Christian if ever there was one, Jack."

Jack drove the Oneonta down the lake with the best speed he could make with such a crowd.

It was not until after they had left Lowport that he had time to think of Nina, and then he turned the wheel over to Captain Hanks, and started to look her up.

To his surprise and alarm, he found that she was not on board, nor did anyone know anything about her. The Dixport people who had gone to the picnic were not in Nina's set, and had paid no especial attention to her. One lady—a Mrs. Redfern—declared that she saw Nina rowing out on the lake alone about noon, but she did not remember to have seen her after that.

Here was more mystery.

Dr. McCloud being away, Jack did not stop to send word to the servants at the big house about the matter.

Explaining to Charley Bright what was wanted, Jack hurriedly put his old sailboat into commission, and started off up the lake.

Never in all his life had he felt so terrible; never until now did he realize the affection he felt for Nina.

Actually, Jack felt but little hope of ever seeing the doctor's daughter again.

He could see it but one way—that the boat had been upset, and Nina drowned.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FAIRY IS KNOCKED SKY-HIGH.

"I don't understand this thing one bit," said Charley Bright, as he steered away from Dixport wharf.

Jack was getting his sail into commission, and did not immediately answer.

As soon as all was ready he dropped into his place, remarking:

"What was it you said, Charley? The sail was flapping so that I did not hear."

"I said I didn't understand what we were going up the lake for this time of night," repeated Charley.

"No, I don't suppose you do," replied Jack. "I didn't have time to tell you."

Jack had thought it all out, and made up his mind not to say a word about Nina as yet.

It is not a pleasant thing for a young girl to find herself the subject of general conversation in a country town.

There might prove to be some explanation for Nina's disappearance. She might have pulled up to Highport for reasons of her own, intending to take the boat there, and missed it.

There were a dozen explanations which suggested themselves to Jack, and as he had determined to put in the night searching for Nina after he got through with Tommy's matter he concluded to say nothing about it to Charley in the meanwhile.

But what was Tommy's matter?

How came it that the great Tommy Tyburn, son and heir of the high and mighty magnate of Mofford, should appeal to Jack above all others for help in an affair so secret that it must not be breathed above a whisper?

The explanation is simple.

It was because Jack had proved himself a true and honest fellow, shrewd, patient, persevering and up to his business every time.

Thus Tommy when he found himself in trouble turned to his enemy for help, feeling that he was one to be depended upon.

That his confidence was not misplaced Tommy was destined to learn.

"I think you might tell a fellow, Jack," said Charley, who

was dying of curiosity to know what all this mystery meant. "Where are you going, anyhow? Back to the wreck?"

"You've hit it, Charley."

"I saw you talking to Admiral Tommy. If I was in your place I wouldn't have gone over there for the asking the way you did, Jack?"

"Why not?" asked Jack.

"Why not? Hasn't the fellow done everything he could possibly do to break you? Served him right to run his old tub on the rocks. He was too proud to come aboard the Oneonta. What the deuce was he going to do? Wait for you to come and take him off?"

"His old tub happens to be a new tub, Charley. As for the rest, when I find a fellow in trouble I help him. It makes no difference whether he is an enemy or a friend."

"Jack, you are white, every inch of you. I couldn't do it."

"It's business, and I'm out for business," replied Jack. "It never pays to make enemies or to keep them. The more friends a man has the better business he can do. Yes, I'm going to the wreck to take Tommy off, and you want to keep perfectly mum about all you see and hear to-night, Charley; don't you forget that."

"There seems to be a deuce of a lot of mystery about it all," grumbled Charley. "However, I'm only doing it on your account, Jack, so I'm not going to bother my head as to what it is all about."

Jack let the conversation drop here, and drove the boat on to the wreck of the Fairy with the best speed he could make.

He had provided himself with a lantern, and as they drew near the Fairy he told Charley to wave it to let Tommy know that they were coming.

Jack looked ahead for the answering signal, but saw none. Even the stern light which Tommy had promised to keep burning to guide Jack to the wreck was not in place as it should have been.

"I see a boat pulling ashore! There's four men in it!" Charley suddenly exclaimed.

"Put down your light," said Jack. "There is something wrong here. I wonder if this can be a trick of Tommy's to get me in a hole?"

"I'd like to bet a pair of boots it is," said Charley; "but, then, I'd feel a little more sure of it if I knew what it's all about."

"Wait!" said Jack, dropping his sail. "I see the boat. I'm going to hold up a minute. I'm afraid something has happened. I don't like this a bit."

He went forward, and remained watching the boat.

It was altogether too dark to distinguish the figures with any distinctness.

The men were pulling rapidly for the island.

A moment later it passed in among the bushes and disappeared.

"I'm afraid that means trouble of the worst kind for Tommy!" exclaimed Jack. "I don't believe he would go back on what he said to me. He'd be a fool if he did."

"I could tell better if I knew what it was all about," Charley said again.

The words were scarcely uttered when a bright light suddenly shot up from the Fairy amidships, and a fearful explosion burst upon the still night air.

"Oh, my!" cried Charley. "Look! Look!"

It was hardly necessary to say look.

The wreck of the Fairy seemed to rise right out of the water and split into a thousand pieces.

There was a great flash of flame, followed by black darkness.

The fairy had vanished.

Jack's rival had been swept out of existence and would trouble him no more.

"Great Scott, Jack! What do you suppose did that?" exclaimed Charley, as soon as he recovered from the shock.

"Thieves! Robbers!" exclaimed Jack. "Oh, Charley, this is a terrible piece of business! I am afraid they have killed Senator Tyburn and Tommy, too!"

"Senator Tyburn! What has he got to do with it?" cried Charley. "They say the senator has been in Chicago for a week. Of course he was not on board the boat?"

"Of course he was. Look here, Charley. I've got to tell you the whole business now, for this has turned out to be a very serious matter. Senator Tyburn has been in Chicago for the last two weeks speculating on the Board of Trade. He hit the wheat market heavy, and came out ahead to the tune of twenty-five thousand dollars. Next thing for him was to go on a big spree, and he landed on board the Fairy to-day as drunk as a boiled owl, with all his cash with him. He was sound asleep in the deck stateroom when the steamer sank."

Naturally, Tommy couldn't leave under the circumstances, so he asked me to come up to-night in this sailboat and help him get his father home."

"You don't say!" exclaimed Charley. "Well, well! I knew the senator hit the whisky pretty heavy at times, but I didn't suppose it was as bad as that."

"I've heard of it before. It isn't generally known, though. He always goes to Chicago when he gets on his tares. Some one has caught onto the situation, and has got off with the cash and done for the senator, Tommy and the steamer, all at one clip. I think I can guess what it all means."

"You are thinking of those escaped convicts, Jack?"

"I am. Senator Tyburn was the one who railroaded that man Brown to the penitentiary. I'll bet you what you like they were hiding on the island and sneaked aboard the steamer, blew her up, and got off with the cash."

"But how the deuce could they blow her up? Where would they get the stuff to blow with?"

"I can explain that, too. Who owns the island, Charley? Do you happen to know?"

"Why, your father owned it, Jack. He used to run the slate quarry there."

"Exactly so. It belongs to my father's bankrupt estate. Up at the slate quarry, which was never anything but a failure and a dead drag to my poor father, there is, or was, a lot of dynamite stored. I've warned Captain Carley, who is looking after my father's affairs, two or three times that it ought to be taken away, but at last accounts it hadn't been attended to. What's the matter with the convicts getting hold of it and making use of it? There you are, Charley, the whole thing explained."

Jack spoke quietly, but he was actually laboring under terrible excitement.

There was nothing vindictive about this boy.

To think of Tommy and his father being blown out of existence in this fashion seemed horrible to him.

The fact that the Fairy had been removed from his path forever gave him no pleasure. He did not even think about it.

And, besides all this, there was Nina.

What if the doctor's daughter had fallen into the hands of the escaped convicts?

Jack shuddered as he thought of it.

"We must get to work, Charley!" he cried. "It won't do to be hanging around here."

He ran the boat directly over the spot where the Fairy had lain, but could see no sign of her.

"I'm going up to the slate quarries, Charley!" Jack exclaimed, and he turned the boat in toward the shore.

CHAPTER XX.

ON THE ISLAND.

"The island," as it was always called, for, strange to say, it had no other name, was densely wooded all around the shores, while in the middle rose a little hill bare of trees, on the side of which was located the slate quarry, which Colonel Bradley had tried in vain to make a success.

Jack knew the place thoroughly, for in the days when his father worked the slate quarry he used to often come over there and hang around.

A little creek set in from the lake at a point nearly opposite where the Fairy sank, and it was up this creek that the boat had disappeared.

Instead of standing for the creek, Jack ran the boat a little way above, and dropped anchor in a small cove.

"Gee, Jack, I don't like this business," said Charley. "Suppose we run right into them fellers, as we are liable to, what have we got to defend ourselves with? Say, if it is that feller Brown he'll have it in for you in the worst kind of a way. If we run up against them we are as good as dead."

"And what about Tommy and his father? Suppose they have been taken prisoners and carried up to the quarry, as I more than half suspect. Are we to leave them there in the hands of the convicts without trying to do a thing to help them?"

"What are they to you, Jack? They have always tried their best to harm you. I don't know as they ever did you any good."

Jack said nothing.

Jumping ashore, he proceeded to make the boat fast.

"Hand me the lantern, Charley," he said. "If you don't want to follow me I'm sure you don't have to. This is a free country. You can do just as you please."

"Oh, I'll go if you are bound to go," replied Charley, somewhat calmed down. "Of course I'm not afraid."

Setting the lantern down, Jack went into the bushes and cut two stout sticks.

"That's my weapon, Charley!" he exclaimed, as he handed him one of them. "If I do run up against Brown and he gets this over the head it will make him sick."

"Are you going right up the creek?" asked Charley.

"Yes; it's the longest way I know, but there is a path there, and we will do better to follow it. I don't know whether to use the lantern or not. It might spoil all if the light should happen to be seen."

"I don't see how they could have helped seeing us that time," said Charley.

"Still they would not expect us to follow them. Come on. There is no use wasting time talking. We want to get ahead."

Jack now pushed his way through the bushes until he came to the creek, which he followed up to the foot of the hill.

Beyond lay the clearing, with the quarry on the hillside.

At the entrance to the quarry, which was a mere cut in the hillside, stood a small hut built by Jack's father for the accommodation of the workmen.

The place was supposed to have been deserted long ago, and certainly no more secluded spot or secure hiding place could have been found for the convicts to conceal themselves in.

"You see," breathed Jack, hastily extinguishing the lantern.

There was a light shining in the window of the hut, and behind it dark figures could be seen moving about.

"There is someone there as sure as fate!" whispered Charley. "I wonder if it can be the convicts?"

"That's for us to find out," replied Jack. "Come on!"

Jack now stole up to the window and peered in.

It was just as he expected.

Four men in convict's clothes were sitting around an old table, upon which lay a large leather wallet and a pile of bills.

With his shaved head and convict's clothes it was somewhat difficult for Jack to recognize his old acquaintance, Mr. Brown, in the man who was counting the money, but he did so after a minute.

It was Brown, sure enough, and there could be no doubt that the money and the wallet belonged to Senator Tyburn, whom Jack now came to the conclusion must be dead.

"How much do you make it?" asked one of the men, when Brown had finished counting up the pile.

"There's a little over twenty-eight thousand dollars," was the reply; "enough to put us out of the country, and give us a blame good racket when we strike Canada. If we only had the clothes," said Brown, restoring the bills to the wallet. "If we only had the clothes. Question is how to get them. I am still of the opinion that there is only one way."

"Yes, and get caught," said another.

"Not at all," replied Brown. "I'll take the chances alone. I'll pull over to Westport and crack the store; there's clothes enough to be had there."

"And the money? Aren't you going to divide now?" another of the men asked.

"Why, sure," was the reply. "We may as well. I—hold up! Someone outside as sure as fate! Slide into the other room, boys! I'll sneak out and see what it means."

He sprang to the door and darted out.

"Stop, you son-of-a-sea-cook!" shouted one of the others. "I see your game!"

Instead of stopping, Brown dashed out into the darkness, and ran down the hill, disappearing in the woods by the creek.

He was closely pursued by the others, and the air rang with fierce shouts.

Being at the side of the hut, Jack and Charley were not observed.

"Gee! He has run off with the boodle!" breathed Charley.

"If they get him they'll kill him sure!"

"Hush!" breathed Jack. "Watch!"

"He's making for the boat. If he gets it they will be in the soup," Charley exclaimed.

We neglected to mention that the boys saw the boat hidden among the bushes at the head of the creek.

Crouching down so that the light from the window would not shine on them, the boys continued to watch and listen.

"There he goes!" whispered Jack, suddenly. "Look! Look! He's making for the Gooseneck! He means to swim across to the mainland! By Jove, Charley, he has given them the slip. They think he has gone down the creek!"

They could see the dim outlines of a man's form skinning along just inside the line of trees, while the shouts of the other convicts could be heard down the creek.

"That's what he is up to as sure as fate," said Charley.

"We can head him off!" answered Jack. "We can and we must. I'm afraid there is no doubt that Tommy and his father are done for, but we may be able to run down that scoundrel and get the cash! Charley, you follow me!"

Thus saying, Jack slid around the hut and started over the hill.

The hut being between them, there was no chance of being seen by the burglars.

In a few moments they had passed over the hill and beyond the clearing, gaining the woods on the other side.

CHAPTER XXI.

JACK FINDS PLENTY OF BUSINESS.

"Hark! Do you hear him?"

"No; I can't say I do."

The boys had passed on down the edge of the Gooseneck, and were all ready for whatever was coming next.

But having once lost sight of Brown it was by no means certain that they would ever see him again, for the Gooseneck was long and narrow, and there was no telling at what particular point the convict would attempt to cross.

"I can hear nothing," said Jack after a little. "We were mistaken, it seems."

"Do you give it up?" asked Charley.

"Not by any means. We will push on along the shore. The narrow part of the Gooseneck is further down, you know."

"I wonder if he knows? That's more to the point."

"It's mighty hard to tell whether he does or not. He must have learned something about the lake while he was hanging around here that time. The other fellows may know nothing about it. Of course these convicts come from all over the State."

"I'll bet you that's just what it is, and that's why he tried to play it on them. Say, it was done slick, wasn't it, Jack?"

"It was done in such a hurry that it nearly took my breath away. I—Hush! I hear something now."

"There was certainly a rustling in the bushes a little further on."

Jack thought that it might be a partridge, and he paused to make sure. After a moment he knew that it must be a man.

He was coming stealthily along through the trees.

In the distance the shouts of the other convicts could be heard. They seemed to be still following the creek, and were away off the scent.

"Hope they don't go for our boat," whispered Charley.

"Hush! Lay low!" answered Jack.

"Wonder where they got their boat from?" continued Charley, paying no heed.

Finding Charley incorrigible, Jack crept on ahead, and crouched down again.

He had now reached the narrowest point on the Gooseneck, the one most likely to be chosen by anyone familiar with the channel who wanted to cross.

Someone was coming; someone was right there; a minute would decide the business.

Jack clutched his stick, and took his place behind a tree, Charley creeping noiselessly up beside him.

Suddenly the man stepped out right in front of them.

It was Brown in his convict clothes.

"Whack! Whack!"

Down came the sticks on his head, and Brown, with a sharp cry, dropped like a log and lay perfectly still.

"Heavens! We have killed him!" gasped Jack. "I didn't mean to do that."

"He'd have killed us all right if it had been up to him to do it," retorted Charley.

"Hark! What in thunder was that?"

A low cry—half moan—was heard, then a gurgling sob.

"There's someone else here," said Jack. "We must be quick!"

He bent down over Brown, and in a twinkling had the wallet out of the fellow's pocket and in his own.

Feeling in his other pockets, he found a revolver, which he immediately took possession of.

This had been taken from the keeper of the penitentiary, who had been killed at the time of the escape.

"He's coming to!" exclaimed Charley. "We must tie him."

"That's what; but I haven't got any string."

"I have. Here, take it. You can do the job better than I can, I guess."

Jack seized the string, and lost no time in tying Brown's hands behind him.

"Don't kill me, Bill! Don't kill me!" groaned the wretch.

"By time, I believe you have done me up as it is! I—ha! Who are you?"

He had just caught sight of Jack.

"Don't you know me, Brown?" Jack asked, bending down closer.

"I know you now! I've forgotten your name, though. You are the boy who owns the boat."

"That's who I am! What have you done with Senator Tyburn and his son?"

"I—the—are—" gasped Brown, and then with a dismal groan he sank back. His senses had left him. He had fainted again.

Just then the groaning was heard behind them once more.

"What on earth can that mean?" muttered Jack. "Here, Charley, you stay by this fellow, while I go back into the woods and find out."

"Don't, Jack! Don't! Let's stick together. This fellow is dead, or, anyway, he can't get a move on him with his hands tied. I don't want to be left alone."

"Come on, then. I'm going, anyhow."

"I wish we had the lantern."

"Lantern nothing! Do you forget that there are three more of these fellows hanging around these woods somewhere? We want to go mighty slow."

Jack kept on among the trees.

The groaning kept right up now, and he was able to go straight to the sound.

It brought them to a thick clump of bushes.

The groans seemed to come from their midst.

"Who's in there? What's the matter?" Jack called out.

The answer was a piercing scream in a woman's voice, and the sound of someone scrambling up.

"Nina!" cried Jack, a suspicion of the truth dawning upon him.

Charley thought he must be crazy, but Jack, rushing in among the bushes, came out again bearing the fainting form of Nina McCloud in his arms.

"What! What! What!" cried Charley. "What on earth ever brought her here?"

"Get out of my way! She's dying, I think!" gasped Jack.

Jack made a rush for the shore.

He had not reached it when a hoarse voice sang out:

"I hear him, fellers. He's right down here. Come on! Come on! We'll kill that snoozer! He shan't escape!"

CHAPTER XXII.

JACK MAKES WONDERFUL DISCOVERIES.

"By thunder, Jack, this is a bad job!" groaned Charley. "If we are going to lug that girl them fellers will catch us sure!"

"Take to your heels and save yourself, then, you coward!" cried Jack. "I'm out for business and my business just now is to save the life of this poor girl."

"Sha'n't do anything of the sort," retorted Charley, a good deal abashed. "I shall stick by you, of course."

If Nina had been of any weight it would have been worse even than it was, but she was as light as a feather, and Jack was a boy of unusual strength.

Still, after a little, he found his strength going, and abandoning the idea of going any further he turned aside and pushed deeper in among the bushes, with the intention of laying down his burden and hiding until the convicts had passed.

To his surprise he came out upon a small clearing where there were rocks and a great pile of earth and stones thrown up.

It looked as if someone had been blasting there.

In the side of the hill a wooden door had been built.

Although Jack thought he knew every inch of the island, he did not remember ever to have seen this place.

"They are right on top of us!" gasped Charley. "You've got the revolver, Jack. Better set her down and fight."

"Just what I am going to do!" panted Jack.

He was looking about for a proper place to drop his burden when a deep voice suddenly exclaimed:

"Bring her in here, Jack! Bring her in here!"

Jack started as if he had been stung.

If there was a voice in all the world that he knew, this was the one.

"Oh! Look there!" cried Charley.

Jack had wheeled about before he spoke.

There on the hillside where he had noticed the wooden door stood a man with a lantern.

"Father!" gasped Jack, and in his excitement he almost let Nina fall, for there stood Colonel Bradley looking at him with a loving yet sorrowful gaze.

"Yes, I still live, my boy!" he exclaimed. "Bring her in here!"

Colonel Bradley stood aside holding the door open, and Jack passed him, closely followed by Charley Bright.

The door was closed and fastened behind them, and as the light of the lantern was flashed ahead Jack found himself standing in a sizable excavation roughly fitted up with a bed, table, chairs, et cetera.

All breathless and quite overcome with astonishment, Jack laid Nina down upon the bed and turned to face his father, who, setting down the lantern, threw his arms around him and pressed the boy to his breast, exclaiming:

"Jack! Jack! Oh, my son! My son!"

"Father!" cried Jack. "Can it be possible? And all these months I have been mourning for you as dead!"

"Not dead, Jack! Not dead, boy. I have done very wrong to keep you in the dark about this. I know it now. It never should have been done."

"Them fellers have gone past, Jack!" called Charley, who was listening at the door.

"They do not suspect the existence of this place," said Colonel Bradley, hastily. "They were here yesterday and tried the door, but finding it fastened, went away, supposing that this was some part of the old quarry work. Are they chasing you, boys? What is it all about? Have they blown up the new steamer? Was that the explosion I heard?"

"It was," replied Jack. "No, they are not chasing us, father. It is one of their own gang they are after. He lies on the shore unconscious. If they find him they probably will not try to interfere with us."

"I'll sneak out and follow them," said Charley. "I'll find out what they are up to. I'll prove to you that I am no coward, Jack. You want to talk to your father, of course. What do you say if I get the boat and bring it around here?"

"Report what they are up to first," said Jack. "I'm sorry I called you a coward, Charley. I was mad for the moment. I know that you are as brave as they make 'em. Forgive me, please."

"Don't say a word," cried Charley. "I'm off now. I'll be back again before long."

Colonel Bradley opened the door and fastened it behind Charley.

Meanwhile Jack had turned to Nina.

Consciousness had come back to the poor girl. She sat up and stared at Colonel Bradley.

"Am I dead?" she gasped. "Are you dead, too, Jack? What is all this?"

It was a time for explanations.

Jack quieted Nina as best he could, and the girl's simple story was soon told.

She had pulled away from Frog Island in a boat, intending to land on the larger and nameless island, in order to search for certain rare wild flowers which she had heard grew there.

She had scarcely landed when she saw the convicts coming through the woods.

They did not seem to see her, so she plunged further into the dense thicket which lined the shore of the island, and remained in hiding for some little time.

At last, when her fears were quieted, Nina started back for her boat, but to her horror found that it had vanished.

Evidently it had been taken by the convicts, and the poor girl found herself in a terrible plight.

Then came the storm. Hearing the Fairy coming through the Gooseneck, Nina started in the direction of the sound, and completely lost herself in the woods.

As to what followed after that she found herself unable to explain, for she remembered nothing except plunging wildly through the woods here and there, until at last she fell exhausted and unconscious at the spot where she was discovered by Jack.

"Lie down and try to sleep, daughter," said Colonel Bradley, kindly. "Jack and I will keep guard. Your troubles are over. You are perfectly safe in our hands."

He drew Jack to one side, and in a low voice began to talk.

"Of course your surprise at seeing me is great, my son," he said. "I will not try to defend my conduct. I have done very wrong. When I ran into the burning house for the last time it was only to run out again by the other door. I had fully made up my mind to commit suicide, and the idea suddenly came to me that here was an easier way out of my troubles. I determined to disappear and carry out a scheme which had long been in my mind. Here I came, and here I have been ever since. I suppose my life insurance has been paid long ago, and my creditors are in a measure satisfied. I have heard

how hard you have worked to pay my debts, Jack, and I cannot tell you how much I respect you for it. I will never disgrace you. I am dead to the world, and if Nina and Charley Bright can be sworn to secrecy dead I purpose to remain until I am able to pay every dollar I owe, including the money the insurance company has paid on my account."

"Father, it never can be," said Jack. "Charley Bright could never keep a secret, and he can be depended upon not to keep this. Besides, you labor under a great mistake. The insurance company has not paid your policy, and do not propose to do so. They have maintained from the first that you were not dead. But what is all this great secret? How is it that by living in this hole you expect to be able to raise money enough to pay your debts?"

"Jack, look here!" replied Colonel Bradley, and he led the way to the other end of the cave, where he opened another door, which had been set in between the rocks, and pointed at the wall, which had been laid bare.

"Coal!" cried Jack. "Oh, father! You always said that it would some day be found here."

"Yes, and here it is," replied the colonel, triumphantly.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE RESCUE.

"And you have done all this work, father?" demanded Jack, looking at the long line of the black vein matter exposed.

"All with my own hands, my boy. No one has been here with me, and, of course, I wanted no one. I have my boat securely hidden. Occasionally at night, well disguised, I have pulled up at Highport for supplies, but with that exception I have never left this place since I came here last fall. I have worked hard, and have fully demonstrated the existence of coal on this island, which is the only piece of property that my creditors have not take away from me. All that remains is to prove the dip of the vein, as I said, and—Hark! There is someone rapping on the outer door! Probably it is Charley come back again."

They hurried out of the mine into the cave.

Nina had sunk off into a deep sleep.

Colonel Bradley paused only to throw a blanket over her, and then joined Jack at the door.

"It's Charley," said Jack. "Shall I let him in, father?"

"I'll open it," replied the colonel, and now I want you to tell me your story, Jack, and what all this means."

Charley came bouncing in with his eyes as big as saucers.

"Look here, Jack, there has been murder done down on the shore!" he cried.

"Brown!" exclaimed Jack.

"Yes, Brown. He came to his senses just as I got in sight of the place where we left him, and those three fellows were upon him a moment later. A big row followed. They accused Brown of hiding the money, and he accused them of stealing it from him—and, Jack, it wound up by one of them knocking him over the head with a club and laying him out dead."

The time had come to explain the situation to Colonel Bradley, and Jack did it as rapidly as he could.

"Well, well!" exclaimed the colonel. "So Tyburn is at his old tricks again, is he? I have told him more than once that this drinking business would be the death of him some day."

Jack made up his mind to take Charley and hunt up Senator Tyburn and Tommy, and his father assented to the plan.

So the boys left the coal mine and made the best of their way back to the quarry hut.

The place was entirely deserted.

The first thing, of course, was to thoroughly search the hut.

Nothing was to be seen of Senator Tyburn or Tommy, but in the little kitchen behind the main room Jack picked up Tommy's hat.

"They have been here!" he exclaimed.

"Tain't certain," replied Charley. "Them fellers may have taken the hat."

"We mustn't give it up too quick," said Jack. "There's the dynamite house down in the woods. I used to know where it was, and I think I can find it even in the dark. Perhaps they are there."

But Jack had quite a little search for the dynamite house.

At last he located it, but just as they were advancing toward the little shanty half hidden among the trees, Jack caught Charley by the arm and drew him back.

"Hist! There's one of the convicts now," he whispered. "We must go slow."

"That's the fellow who did up Brown," replied Charley.

The convict had entered the shanty by this time, and when

the boys got up close to the hut they could hear him talking inside.

"There's someone there!" breathed Charley.

Behind the hut the trees grew thick, and the boys had no difficulty in gaining the place without showing themselves.

There were wide cracks between the boards, and the convict's voice could be very distinctly heard.

"Look a-here, boss," the convict was saying, "do you know what kind of a man you have run up against—hey?"

"It makes no difference what I know or what I don't know; I'm a sick man. Show some mercy to me and my son!"

It was Senator Tyburn's voice, Jack knew only too well. He tried to peer through the cracks and find out what was going inside, but the space was too narrow, and he could not see thing.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the convict, sneeringly. "You don't know me; no, you don't, but I'm going to let you know right now. I'm Matt Maddox! There, now do you know who I am?"

"Never heard of you in my life," was the feeble response.

"What! Never heard of Matt Maddox, who got a lifer for killing two men up to Highport ten years ago?"

"I believe I do recall something about it. It was a barroom quarrel. You were sentenced to death and the governor commuted the sentence to imprisonment for life."

"That's me, boss. Well, I killed them two men, and I've killed two more—my mates what broke jail with me—and unless you do just as I tell you there will be still two more corpses on this here island; one will be yours and t'other your son's."

"What do you want me to do?" asked the senator, feebly. "Why don't you come to the point?"

"Well, the p'int is jest here, boss. That there dough of yours is hid on this island somewhere, but I can't stop to look for it, large as the stake is, for I've got to get a move on or be took, one of the two. I'm going to take your clothes, boss, and give you mine, and I want you to draw me a check for, say, ten thousand dollars on your banker in New York, what you spoke about when you offered us five hundred dollars a while ago. Do that an' I'll pull you and your son over to the mainland and leave you near some house. You'll pay the check all right, I know, for you are as rich as mud, and—"

"Never!" cried Senator Tyburn, suddenly breaking in on the convict's speech. "I've got some life left yet! Take that, you villain! Oh! Ah! Don't choke me! Help! Oh, help!"

There was the sound of a blow, a scuffle, a fall, and then all in an instant the cry rang out in a firm, manly voice:

"Let go of that gentleman! I'm out for business! Throw up your hands or I'll shoot you dead!"

It was Jack.

There he stood in the doorway, calm and resolute, covering the convict with Brown's revolver.

"Jack Bradley!" gasped Senator Tyburn, scrambling to his feet.

"Hold on! Don't shoot! I surrender!" whined the convict.

He backed against the wall of the shack and threw up his hands.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

It was a complete triumph for Jack.

Jack had some strong twine in his pocket, and with it he tied up the fellow, hand and foot, and threw him upon his back on the floor.

The man made no resistance, for Charley kept the revolver close at his head.

Meanwhile Senator Tyburn stood by in silence, trembling from head to foot.

In one corner, upon the floor, lay Tommy, entirely unconscious, breathing heavily, with his head all matted with blood.

"Jack Bradley!" gasped the senator, as Jack turned toward him. "It was heaven sent you here! How can I ever thank you? Strange that you should always be the one! My boy, give me your hand. You are a noble fellow. From this day forward I am your firm friend; but oh, Jack, help me to save my poor son!"

"How is it with Tommy? What happened?" demanded Jack, shaking hands cordially with the man whom he had regarded as his worst enemy until now.

"We were attacked on the wreck of the Fairy," explained the Senator. "Tommy told me all about you, and that you had kindly consented to come to our aid. These wretches came upon us suddenly. Tommy was knocked over the head with a club while trying to defend me. They stole a large amount of

money from me, and brought us here, intending to make me pay more, but—"

"Yes, I know," broke in Jack; "but we must look after Tommy. Your money is all safe, Mr. Tyburn. I know where it is."

"You, Jack? You have it?" cried the senator, joyfully.

"Not with me, but it is where I can put my finger on it at any moment. You shall have it before we leave the island, never fear."

They then turned their attention to Tommy. Senator Tyburn expressed his fears that the poor boy's skull was fractured, but Jack thought not.

He then explained to the senator that he had the sailboat ready, and told him about Nina McCloud, merely stating that he had left her in a cave near the Gooseneck. Not a word did he mention about his father, of course.

It was speedily arranged that Tommy should be carried to the boat, and Jack and Charley did it, the senator, who was so weak and nervous that he could scarcely walk, closely followed them.

Jack then sailed the boat around into the Gooseneck, and leaving Charley in charge, hurried to the cave, passing on the way the dead bodies of Brown and the other convict. Both were terribly mangled about the head; the weapon used by the murderer seemed to have been a heavy stone.

To explain the situation to Colonel Bradley was but the work of a moment.

"My son, you have done nobly, and you have made a powerful friend," said the colonel. "I know J. C. Tyburn well. He is pompous and purse-proud, but at heart he is really a good fellow. Tell him all about me, Jack. Perhaps he can help us develop the mine and put me on my feet again. Accept no money from him. Let that be your reward."

Nina was then awakened, and proved herself quite recovered by walking to the boat.

"Here is your money, Senator," said Jack, handing it over. "I have not counted it. I know nothing about the amount. I give it to you just as it came into my hands."

Senator Tyburn was most profuse in his thanks. "You will hear from me, Jack," he said. "We will not talk about it now, but your reward is sure, my brave boy."

Back to Motford was the next move. Tommy recovered consciousness on the way, and was able to walk unassisted to the house. For several days he kept his bed, but he was not seriously injured, and soon found himself all right again.

Nina slept in her own bed that night, and was in good shape next day. Of course the doctor overwhelmed Jack with thanks for the brave part he had played.

Early in the morning Jack ran the Oneonta to Lowport, got the sheriff and his posse, and went to the island, but when they went to the shack they found it empty. Maddox had broken loose and escaped. He was never seen or heard of again, and the general impression was that he lost his life trying to reach the mainland.

The bodies of Brown and the other convict were returned to the penitentiary later and were buried in the prison cemetery.

Senator Tyburn came on board the Oneonta next day, and insisted that Jack should explain what it was that he wanted him to do, and Jack did, and the senator did it.

He personally visited each one of Colonel Bradley's creditors and paid twenty-five cents on the dollar for all claims, agreeing to be responsible for as much more at the end of a year.

That night Colonel Bradley slept in Senator Tyburn's house, and six months later a flourishing coal mine was working full head on the island, the senator supplying the necessary cash to put the enterprise on its feet.

The mine proved a complete success, and within a year Colonel Bradley was able to pay every dollar he owed, and within two he was a rich man again.

The Fairy was raised, and Senator Tyburn presented her to Jack.

For three years Jack continued to run her on the lake, using the Oneonta as a freight boat. At last he sold her, married Nina McCloud, and went into business with his father.

To-day he and Tommy Tyburn are partners, their fathers having passed into another life, and both are very wealthy men.

Anyone but Jack would have retired long ago, but our hero sticks to his old motto, and is still Out for Business.

Next week's issue will contain "THE MUTINEERS OF THE MOON; OR, THE BOY SEALERS OF THE ALEUTIAN ISLANDS." By Capt. Thos. H. Wilson.

CURRENT NEWS

Ever since a story that the State of Michigan wanted a man to hunt wolves on Isle Royale was printed, the government's office, the land commissioner's office, the game warden's office, and, in fact, most of the State offices, have been deluged with applications for the job. It seems that every one in the country wants to slaughter wolves. Few of the applicants have ever hunted wolves, but all of them "know" they can.

Martin Stump, a Redondo Beach life guard, is perfectly comfortable while pins or even knives are run into his flesh. On withdrawing the pins, only a slight indication of blood showed and the wounds healed almost immediately. The fact that he was not sensitive to pain from such punctures was discovered by Stump while working in a machine shop, where he was cut by a tool. He also discovered that he could check the flow of blood by concentrating his mind upon it, and this led to experiments which showed the remarkable condition of his nervous system.

An improvised burglar alarm system was responsible for the capture of one burglar in the village of Byron, west of Rochester, Minn., when two men entered the general store of A. L. Cutting. Mr. Cutting had contrived the system, which was connected with the telephone exchange. As the two men opened the window in the store the alarm sounded and the telephone operator notified Mr. Cutting, who armed himself, and, assisted by his clerk, caught one of the men, who gave the name of Frank Foster. The other, whose name is said to be Frank Bailey, escaped. Foster was lodged in the County Jail here.

Fox farming is the occupation of James Kramer, former Muskegon resident, now residing at Athabasca Landing, northern Alberta, Canada, who is visiting in Muskegon. Kramer has been in his present occupation and location for six years. The foxes are secured by trading with the Indian trappers, white men being unable to acquire the trick of trapping them. About fifty foxes are now owned by Kramer, they being in black, silver and cross breeds and worth about \$12,000. On his way from Alberta here, stopping in Chicago, he sold three silver females for \$3,500, the prices ranging much higher since the outbreak of the war.

Last spring, when the Chicago White Sox and New York Giants' world-touring party landed in New York, there was a wild scramble on the part of baseball magnates to sign the players who had returned. Federal League agents were there and consequently the players were able to get almost any sum they demanded. Dick Egan, an infielder, who had been traded to Brooklyn by Cincinnati, asked \$25,000 for three years and was signed at that figure. It has proved a costly investment for the

Brooklyn team, as Egan has been sitting on the bench most of the season, drawing about \$54.10 per game for doing nothing. He failed to show the form of O'Mara, a youngster Brooklyn purchased.

A great big eight-inch centipede, an old fellow with black body and light-brown claws, invaded the French class at the High School, Austin, Texas. When first noticed he was crawling up Mme. Muenier's dress. The French class of nine girls screeched simultaneously, but Miss Lucie Wooten was the heroine of the hour, knocking the centipede from the teacher's clothing. One would have thought a mouse was loose in the schoolroom by the way the young women hopped upon the benches. The centipede escaped to its hole in the wall, but in a little while came out again. With the aid of the janitor and his broom and a boy, who procured a bottle, the centipede was captured.

A man who eats only every three or four days would be considered a novelty almost anywhere, but when that man is a farm hand, who works hard in the hot sun and throughout many hours, he is a marvel indeed. Such a man is LeRoy Smith, a young farmer who lives five miles from Gentry, Mo. He weighs 265 pounds, despite his poor appetite and hard work, and is able to do as much or more work than the average "hand." This year he has worked all through the harvest and threshing season for the farmers in this vicinity, but has never eaten oftener than every three days. In vain did the country people plead with him to partake of their food, but he refused on the plea that he was not hungry and did not wish to eat.

While trying to tie a bull in the barn of the Motter farm, about a mile and a half back of Highspire, Pa., Eugene Book, fifteen years old, was gored severely when the animal attacked him. Peter Jacobs, a farmer, also was injured when the animal turned upon him as he was trying to rescue Book. With blood streaming from wounds on his chest and arms, the farmer, with several farm hands, battled with the bull for a half hour before it could be caught and tied in the barn. Young Book had a hole about three inches deep in his neck, and suffered lacerations and bruises. He was taken to the Harrisburg hospital, where he underwent an operation. When Book, who is employed by Jacobs, went to the barn to feed the stock he noticed the bull was at large in the stable, and he tried to catch him. As soon as he opened the door the bull rushed at him and knocked him down. Before Jacobs could get him away the animal had sunk its horn into the youth's neck and had injured him probably internally. The animal then turned upon the farmer, and before he could get away inflicted several deep lacerations about the chest, arms and legs. Grabbing pitchforks, Jacobs and several other farmhands attacked the big animal.

THE COUNT OF CONNEMARA

—OR—

The Old Pirate's Secret Treasure

By J. P. Richards

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER XV (Continued).

It seemed that the pirate ship attacked a large English merchant vessel coming from India on the Irish coast, when only a weak defense was at first offered.

The pirates then boarded the merchant vessel, expecting to sweep all before them, when over three hundred soldiers suddenly appeared on the deck.

The pirates were astounded and paralyzed, and their capture was easily effected by the soldiers.

Then into Galway bay sailed the merchant vessel and the dreaded pirate ship known as the Remorseless.

Lord Draco and his son hastened on board the pirate ship when she entered the bay, the former saying, in joyous and excited tones:

"Now, Myron, our hated enemy will die on the scaffold at last, and then we can carry out that project of yours regarding the old Cuban's daughter."

Great was the surprise of the two men when they discovered that the Captain Crow commanding the Remorseless in her last voyage was not their old enemy, but a huge genuine black man, whose color could not be changed by any amount of soap.

And not a single one of the prisoners bore the slightest resemblance to the former Captain Sable or to the young deserter known as Barry Conamore.

All the prisoners were sent to the strongest prison in the harbor, and a large force of soldiers was detailed from the barracks to watch over them.

It was expected that they would all suffer death on the gallows in a few days.

The Count of Connemara did not sail for the West Indies on the following day, as he declared that he would remain to witness the execution of the pirates.

The pirates were tried on the next day, and they were all sentenced to perish on the scaffold at nine o'clock on the following morning.

Lord Draco, as Warden of Galway, passed the sentences of death.

On the evening of the trial, Joan Gilfoil appeared before the old nobleman in a new disguise.

Her father had a private interview with the young count an hour before, and it was held in the deep wood at the back of Mount Draco.

Each of the spies had important information.

The giant had something to say about the mysterious ghost at the large mansion, and his daughter informed Lord Draco that an attempt would be made to rescue the pirates that night.

"What proof have you, Joan?" inquired Lord Draco.

"Proof enough," answered Joan, in decided tones.

And she went on to give her evidence.

She had been watching the Costello mansion that after-

noon, when she saw an old fishwoman leave the place by the back way.

Suspecting the old woman, Joan followed her, and tracked her to the taverns most frequented by the foreign sailors in the harbor.

The old woman passed along from tavern to tavern, as if in quest of some person, while she exchanged whispered words and private signs with several of the foreign sailors.

At last, and toward dusk, the old creature entered a tavern near the prison where the condemned pirates were confined.

On entering there she made a signal to an old man, who followed her up the stairs to a private room at the back of the house.

Joan went back into the yard and climbed up into a large fruit tree, from a branch of which she could look into the bedroom, where the old fishwoman and the old man were busily engaged in counting gold pieces on a table.

"And now, Lord Draco," said the vengeful girl, with a triumphant smile, "who do you think they turned out to be?"

"I can't imagine."

"Then let me tell you that the old fishwoman was no other than that little villain, my brother, and the old man getting the gold was the head jailer of the prison in disguise."

The interview was held in the private sitting-room where Lord Draco and his son were captured by the pirates, on the night when Grace was borne away and afterward rescued by the giant.

The nobleman sprang from his seat as soon as Joan made the final startling statement, exclaiming:

"By gracious, this must be seen to at once, and I will away to the prison."

"Take it easy, my lord," cried a loud voice behind them, "as you are my prisoner. So is this treacherous girl. Seize them, my lads!"

A tall man with a black face pointed a pistol at Lord Draco and Joan, while in through the door rushed several armed men wearing black masks.

The masked men seized the startled nobleman and the girl, the former yelling aloud for help.

"It is no use, Lord Draco," said the black leader of the band, "as your mansion is in my possession again, and I am the real Captain Crow, formerly known to you as Barry Conamore."

CHAPTER XVI.

BOLD STROKES ALL AROUND.

All was as silent as death in Mount Draco when the young captain of the pirates had announced who he was.

Lord Draco listened, as if expecting to hear some of his armed guards responding to his yells, or the clatter of arms, but not even a footstep could be heard in the halls.

Joan glared at the pirate chief, and then at Lord Draco, smiling grimly as she remarked to the latter:

"I hope you'll believe me next time. Where is my father now?"

(To be continued)

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

CALF HAS RABBIT'S TAIL.

William Wilson, a farmer, of Bedford, Ind., is the possessor of a freak calf. The animal, apparently healthy, is unable to walk, its movements being restricted to an erratic jumping motion. It was born without a tail, the nearest approach to such an appendage being a hairy growth, similar in form and size to that displayed by the rabbit. Hundreds of people have been attracted to the Wilson farm by reports of the calf's peculiarities.

PANAMA-PACIFIC BROOM EXHIBIT.

All of the brooms used by the Panama-Pacific International Exposition will be made in a working exhibit in the Palace of Manufactures, where a modern and fully equipped broom factory was recently installed. Eight machines will make it possible for the exhibitors to make every type of broom commonly used, or that the exposition will have any need for, from the heavy street-sweeping machine to the light pocket whisk broom. The eight machines include three winders, one sewer, one whisk, one trimmer, one stapler and one bander. The exhibit represents an expenditure of \$15,000, and is located in the southwest corner of the Palace of Manufactures.

FINNS COMING TO EXPOSITION.

Headed by Lauri Pikhala, former president of the Finnish Amateur Athletic Association and now trainer of the Finnish Olympic team, a small band of Finns, among whom are three world's champions, will start next spring for this country with the national championships at the San Francisco Exposition as their objective point.

Although the full strength of the team has not yet been announced, it is certain that Taipale and Niklander, the world's champion discus throwers, and Saaristo, the Olympic javelin champion, will make the trip.

Taipale, who beat the world's best at Stockholm in 1912, is the holder of the European record of 156 feet $\frac{1}{8}$ inch, which is just topped by Jim Duncan's record of 156 feet $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

He won both best hand and right and left hand throws at the last Olympic games, incidentally winning the two-handed event from his compatriot, Niklander, who holds the world's record of 283 feet 6 inches for this style of throwing.

Niklander, in addition to holding the world's record for the combination discus throw, also holds the Finnish record for one and two handed shot putting.

At Stockholm in 1912 Niklander was beaten by a very small margin by Ralph Rose and Pat McDonald. He has a record of 48 feet with the right hand and 41 feet 6 inches with left.

J. Saaristo, the Olympic champion ambidextrous javelin thrower, created a new world's record of 201 feet 3 inches with one hand at the last Olympic games. This performance, however, has since been surpassed.

Judging from our American javelin record, which is

some 30 feet short of Saaristo's mark, he should have little trouble in annexing the American title.

Niklander and Taipale, however, although perhaps more consistent than our Jim Duncan and Emil Muller, world's record holder and American champion, respectively, may not have such an easy time in their specialty.

The Finnish athletes will make an extended tour of this country both before and after the exposition games, which are scheduled for August 15, 1915.

QUEER HAPPENINGS.

Officials and lawyers of the Queens County Clerk's office, which is being reconstructed, have to climb ladders from floor to floor.

A Paterson, N. J., court decides the middle finger is the most valuable. Henry Hammersmith, who lost three fingers, gets eight weeks' pay for the first finger, five for the ring finger and thirty for the middle finger.

Struck by the steel point of an umbrella in the hands of a playmate, in the Bayonne High School, Lawrence Jarwi suffered a fracture of the skull.

A dead calf and an abandoned auto were found at Troy Hills, N. J. It is believed the motorists thought they had killed a man, and fled.

Charities Commissioner Kingsbury has plate glass substituted for marble partitions in his offices so that everyone can see what everyone is doing.

A big bird variously called an eagle, a buzzard and a duck-hawk swooped from Woolworth building gargoyle and caught a flying pigeon.

Burglars attacked safe of Berghoff Brewing Company in Jersey City with a sledge hammer. They didn't open it. It was not even locked, and besides, it contained nothing.

Patrolman calls at No. 8 Liberty place, Union Hill, N. J., to serve warrant on Gustave Bleaser, but finds him dead.

Because Edward Burns was "so gentlemanly about it," Frederick Reis, No. 123 East Eighty-eighth street, declines to prosecute him for assault.

Efforts to place Bushwick High School girls at real work in offices "for practice" and \$6 per week, fail—they all strike.

Honey bees in Westchester County accused of gathering grape juice, spoiling the crop.

Sophomores, Stevens Institute, turn loose on streets a freshman in baseball trousers, woman's shirtwaist and paper cap.

John Jacob, of No. 30 Croton Terrace, Yonkers, summoned John Willman to court for retaining a canary because its board bill was unpaid. Willman was ordered to return the bird and sue for price of the birdseed.

William Miller, of Sherwood Park, Yonkers, arrested and adjudged incompetent because he went joy-riding in automobiles and refused to pay his fare.

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New York

Scott Price, cement contractor, Logansport, Ind., is engaged during his spare time in building his own grave. He is constructing a mausoleum for his own use in Mt. Hope cemetery. "I am not dying just yet, but I know I will die some day and I want to be prepared," he explained.

A pack sack containing the ears and tails of eight wolves was brought to the county clerk's office the other morning by Will White of the town of Frederic, Burnett County, Wis. Bounty money totaling county orders of \$80 and State orders for a similar sum was paid for the pelts. White is the only rural resident in this section of the State who makes his living entirely from bounty money. Each week he sends several scalps and the monthly receipts run high in the majority of cases. When one county clerk is given his supply of pelts the trapper turns to another officer, and thereby varies his bounty among the counties in this part of the State.

Pressure on the banks forced the bottom of the Panama Canal at Culebra Cut up about twenty-four feet on the night of October 14, a dispatch from Panama reports. This blocked the use of the canal by all vessels having a draught of more than fifteen feet. The stoppage may last six weeks. Dredges are at work removing the obstruction. Seven ships are waiting for passage through the canal and the delay will affect at least sixty more vessels. Colonel

Goethals made an examination at once and found that the trouble had occurred on the east side of the canal, north of Gold Hill. A large mass of traprock, mixed with loose earth, had slipped into the channel. Colonel Goethals in his last report pointed out that the earth in Culebra Cut had not reached a state of equilibrium and that it probably would be necessary to continue dredging operations there for many months after the waterway was opened.

June and July were terrible months for the city of Valparaiso, Chili, which was flooded by torrential rains. Vice-Consul Aldis B. Easterling writes that water from the hills poured down through the streets, carrying mud and sand in such quantities that the drains rapidly filled and choked. As a result the business portion of the city has been covered with mud and sand, ranging in depth from a few inches over most of the streets to several feet in one section, where several business houses were forced to close. Traffic was greatly impeded in all parts of the city, including the street railways to the various suburbs, which have been out of commission for a month, and strong winds from the north have delayed discharging and loading of cargoes in the bay. The city of Valparaiso has under consideration a plan to prevent the recurrence of this calamity by planting trees on the hills above the city. The project is estimated to cost in the neighborhood of \$200,000 United States gold and requires four years for completion.

THE BOY WHO DID IT

—OR—

ALL FOR THE GOOD OF THE TOWN

By William Wade

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XVI (Continued).

Moran listened gravely to all that was said.

"Walk into my house, sir," he said to the millionaire. "I am glad you have come, for I've something to show you which may interest you. Step right this way."

There were two rooms on the ground floor of the log cabin.

One served as a kitchen and living room, the other was fitted up as a sort of office, or rather an architect's drafting room.

The walls were hung all around with the plans of buildings beautifully executed.

There was an architect's table in the middle of the room, with cardboards covered with designs upon it.

Over near the door was a case filled with all the standard works upon architecture and building, besides which samples and models of all sorts lay scattered about.

"This is my workroom, Mr. Isaacs," said the hermit, waving his hand about. "Though I never leave the island, I am in constant correspondence with the outside world. I try to keep up to date, and think I have succeeded fairly well."

"I should say you had," replied Mr. Isaacs, looking around. "This is all most remarkable. I shall want to know more of it. If you are able to convince me of your thorough knowledge of the building business, and are willing to break your rule, go to Bowmanville, and personally superintend this contract of mine, I have no objection to having a figure from Bowman & Melvin."

"I can tell that better when I have seen your plans and specifications," replied Moran.

"They were sent to the hotel at the Landing," said Mr. Isaacs. "You shall have them, though. I will trust them to my young friend Rod."

"And they shall be taken good care of, I promise you," replied Rod; "but before we go any further, Mr. Moran has something to show you on his own account."

This was Rod's surprise.

This was the secret of all his maneuvering.

It was a bold stroke for business.

He was soon to know how it was going to work.

Moran went to the designing table and began pulling about the plans.

"Just take a look at these, Mr. Isaacs," he said.

"Why, what in the world are they?" the millionaire exclaimed. "Plans for opera house at Bowmanville! Plan for hotel! Plan for tenements! Why, my friend, have you gone to the trouble to get up all these on your own account?"

"It is my pleasure to do such work," said Moran. "Rod

and I talked it over; we determined to submit plans to you for your proposed work. I was slow about getting them up, though, as I won't allow any one to help me, and so had to do it all myself. Now that you are here, take a look; examine the plans, and look over the specifications. It may be that you will see a chance to save a few dollars for yourself."

Moran had touched Mr. Isaacs on a tender point.

If there was any money to be saved, the Chicago millionaire was the man to do it.

It was not one hour that he put in with the hermit of the island, but five.

Broad daylight found them still discussing the plans and specifications.

Moran proved himself away up in his work, and as Mr. Isaacs was a man who knew his own business and what he wanted, they got along splendidly together.

Rod wisely kept in the background.

It was all beyond him, and he did not hesitate to say so.

Just before daylight he pulled around to the Belle and found that Charley had worked the steamer off the flats all right.

They brought her around to the entrance to the lagoon, and then Rod pulled back to the smaller island; but he kept out of the hut until he was called by Mr. Isaacs himself.

"Here, Rod, you can come in now," said the millionaire, coming to the door.

Rod hurried to obey.

"Well, I suppose you want to know what the good word is?" said Mr. Isaacs. "I'll tell you: These plans and specifications are in every way superior to the ones my architects have made. I propose to adopt them, pay my architects off and get rid of them, and engage Mr. Moran to superintend my work. The figuring of the contract will be postponed two weeks. Then your firm will be invited to put in a bid with the rest, providing you can give bonds to cover non-fulfillment."

"To any amount, sir," replied Rod. "I refer you to my attorneys, Brown & Bartlett."

"Right," said Mr. Isaacs. "Good-by, Mr. Moran. I shall expect to meet you in Chicago on Thursday, according to agreement. Now, Rod, we will go back to the Belle, and I want you to take me to Whitestown instead of Bowmanville. I have nothing to go there for now."

"All right, sir," said Rod, with his usual cheerfulness.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Mr. Isaacs, as he stepped into the boat. "You're a bright one! You are the boy who did it. You have changed all my plans in more senses than one."

"That's all right, too, sir," said Rod. "I told you it would pay you to listen to me; but as far as the job is concerned, all I ask is a fair show to put my figure in with the rest."

"You'll get that," replied Mr. Isaacs, "and I shouldn't wonder if you got the job."

(To be continued)

INTERESTING TOPICS

MOLLY PITCHER'S FRIEND.

In excellent health in spite of her advanced years, Mrs. Samuel Sipe, Cumberland county's oldest resident, a personal friend of Molly Pitcher, the heroine of Monmouth, celebrated her one hundred and second birthday recently. Her health is good, and although she is unable to walk she can hear clearly and her mind is a marvel for clearness and recollection. Mrs. Sipe was born in Switzerland, October 5, 1812, and came with her parents when only six years of age to this country. The trip was made in a sailing vessel and the voyage consumed sixteen weeks. She lived in Philadelphia for a time and came to Carlisle 95 years ago. She remembers the old stage coaches that made this a stopping point on the road to Pittsburgh and also the running of the first train on the Cumberland Valley, July 4, 1857.

Her stories of Molly Pitcher, with whom she was personally familiar, contain many unique incidents in the life of this peculiar heroine.

ENGLAND ARRESTED GERMAN SPIES.

Perhaps the biggest and most unpleasant surprise that awaited the Kaiser and his advisers at the outbreak of the war was the immediate arrest in England of certain spies, which disclosed the hitherto unsuspected fact to their masters that the business on which these men had been engaged in England was fully known to the English government. If there was one thing that the Germans believed more than another it was that their spies in England were, for the most part, entirely unsuspected.

With the exception of a few highly placed personages, from whom the Germans probably received some trustworthy information, every German spy in England was known to Scotland Yard, as was, most probably, the character of the information he was giving, and, therefore, allowed to give to his government.

In this connection it is a noteworthy fact that nearly all the Germans now placed in confinement in England are of the well-to-do classes.

SHACKLETON STARTS FOR THE ANTARCTIC.

The European war has not prevented the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition from embarking for the South, notwithstanding the fact that some of its members belong, as Shackleton himself formerly did, to the British Naval Reserve. When the reserves were mobilized at the end of July, Sir Ernest offered the services of the expedition, with its stores and provisions, to the admiralty, but fortunately the offer was declined with thanks. The "Endurance," the ship of the Weddell Sea party, left the Thames August 1st and Plymouth August 8th, carrying part of the expedition to Buenos Aires. The "Aurora," which is to carry the Ross Sea section of the expedition, is now at Hobart, Tasmania, and will sail for the Antarc-

tic about the beginning of December. Shackleton and the members of his staff who had not already sailed on the "Endurance" left England September 18th by mail steamers; half of the expedition sailing for Buenos Aires, and the other half for Tasmania. Their departure was delayed by the necessity of buying in England scientific instruments to replace those which had been ordered from Germany.

NO WHITE FLAG FOR FEDERALS.

After an all-day session, which was interrupted by a brief recess the other afternoon, the annual meeting of the Federal League of baseball clubs adjourned, subject to the call of an executive committee composed of President Gilmore, R. B. Ward of Brooklyn and J. E. Robertson of Buffalo.

"We spent the greater part of the day in discussing financial and legal matters of a private nature," President Gilmore said, in announcing the adjournment. "I can positively say that the Federal League will continue its course, with the assurance given us as to substantial financial backing, without regard to what may or may not be done by organized baseball."

The league circuit remains exactly as during the past season, but if it is found desirable to make a change, the executive committee will attend to that, and if necessary another general meeting will be convened either here or in some other convenient city."

There was an apparently well-authenticated report current that William Fischer, catcher of the Brooklyn Nationals, had signed a contract to play with the Chicago Federals next season, but it lacked confirmation by any of the Federal League officials. Second Baseman George Cutshaw, also of the Brooklyn Nationals, was said to have been negotiating with the St. Louis Federals, but this also could not be officially confirmed.

President Gilmore said that he had received a list of twenty-five Major League players from Larry Schlafly of the Buffalo club, all of whom were reported to be willing to go over to the new organization. He also stated that within six weeks he would sign his staff of umpires, which he would select from among about sixteen applicants for these positions.

In regard to a proposed transfer of the Kansas City franchise, proposals were received from prominent men in Cleveland, Cincinnati, West Philadelphia and Toronto. Of these the Philadelphia proposition was looked upon with the most favor, as Pittsburgh could then be placed in the western half of the circuit and the playing schedule arranged to much better advantage with the long jump to Kansas City eliminated.

During the meeting the league championship pennant was awarded to the Indianapolis club, and President J. E. Krause of the winning club said that he expected to retain the flag for many seasons to come.

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

The Vanderbilt Cup and the Grand Prix automobile races have been granted to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition for 1915. Hollis E. Cooley, chief of special events of the exposition, and W. L. Lughson, chairman of the racing committee, have returned from New York City, where they made the necessary preliminary arrangements for the races.

A motor-cycle fire-fighting force, said to be the first in Pennsylvania, has been organized as an auxiliary to Fire Company No. 1, of Glenolden. Five men, each of whom owns a motor cycle, comprise the force. One carries a chemical hose on his machine, another the chemical machine, and the three others carry sections of water hose. The motor-cycle squad can reach any place in the borough in less than two minutes after the sounding of an alarm.

One of the most unusual cases ever known at St. Louis, Mo., and one which is attracting the attention of many physicians, is that of Miss Lena Bearan, who began swallowing plum seeds when she was a small child, and now, at the age of 17, is beginning to cough them up. The physicians who are attending the young woman have sixty-three plum stones in their possession, and know that there are at least a dozen more which the girl coughed up before medical attention was called to the case.

While George Davis, of Millcreek, Ind., was working in an onion field near Walkerton, he was handed a telegram advising him that he was heir to a fortune of about \$20,000. A half hour later he had discarded his overalls, invested in a new suit of clothes and was on board a train for Milwaukee to prove his heirship. "I am going to own my own onion patch when I come back," was Davis' farewell as the train pulled out. He did not know that he had a wealthy relative until the telegram was received.

Thousands of bushels of kafir corn and feterita have been devoured by blackbirds in the northwestern part of Oklahoma; it is said, during the last few months, and the birds are becoming such a pest that commissioners of the counties affected are considering offering a bounty for them. The farmers, especially those living along the river, complain that the birds are becoming more numerous each year. The trees along the river are the natural habitat of the blackbirds. They swoop down on feed racks and grain in swarms.

Mr. and Mrs. Mortimer E. Arnold have just celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their wedding at the home of their daughter, Mrs. Fred De Bruin, Sparta, Wis. The occasion is one of exceptional note owing to the fact that Mr. Arnold's mother was present at this celebration. This venerable lady is in her 100th year. The five living children were also in attendance. They are Orville L. and

Clyde Arnold of Sparta, A. E. Arnold and Mrs. F. V. Wanke of Belleville, Wis., and Mrs. B. E. Sturdevint of Minneapolis.

When Warden Simpson, of the State prison at Jackson, Mich., goes before the Legislature next winter to ask for money to buy more land for prison farms he will have some figures that are likely to prove potent arguments. The figures show what has been done on one of the 80-acre farms purchased last year. The farm cost the State \$25,875, and this year was planted to string beans, after a crop of peas had already been taken off. These beans have been harvested and canned in the prison canning factory, and, figured at wholesale car-lot prices, are worth \$29,531.10. Thus the first year's crop has paid the whole cost of the farm, besides more than enough to pay for the cans in which the beans have been put up.

Edward Rimmers and James P. Kelly, of Oregon City, Ore., are operating the only plant of its kind in the world. It produces eel oil, which is used in the manufacture of leather goods. A by-product is dried eel meat, which finds a ready market as chicken feed. The plant is running at full capacity, its average daily output being fifteen gallons of oil and 240 pounds of dried meat. Fishermen gather the eels with dipnets from the pools in the rocks around the falls. The fish are then taken to the plant, placed in a large vat, and cooked. After a time the valuable oil from the animals rises to the surface and is drained off. The meat is then ground and pressed, and still more oil is procured. From the grinders the eels, now almost powdered, are placed in driers and later are sacked. The government is said to be making a study of the process.

Rex Bassler, a youngster of six, living at Darien, Wis., has probably the strangest driving team in the world—eight snapping turtles, weighing about thirty pounds each and from fifty to seventy-five years old. Rex has tamed them, and they draw him in his express wagon like ponies, although they are not likely to shatter any speed records. The youngster learned that turtles could be tamed while watching his father, Max Bassler, catching turtles for market. He found they were appreciative of kindly treatment, bits of food, and soon was able to make the turtles follow him about. Persuading his father to give him some of the largest, he grouped them for a driving team, and they seem to enjoy the sport as much as he likes to ride behind them. The turtles in Rex's team are so old that their backs are covered with moss. The two largest are males and are savage to all but Rex. He can handle them as he likes and can stand on their backs and let them walk off with him. The team is kept in line by means of a wire harness. Holes were drilled in the backs of the leaders' shells and in the front of those following and all wired together.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 18, 1914.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

A twenty-eight-pound muskie was caught by a set line in Lake Winnebago by Michael Govke of Black Wolf. This is the first time in twenty-five years that Lake Winnebago, Wis., has yielded up a muskie.

Accused of stealing the army revolver of Gen. U. S. Grant, Harry Lockhart, forty, of No. 180 Bergen street, Brooklyn, was held without bail for the grand jury by Magistrate Nash in the Adams Street Court. The complainant was William B. Scarborough, a banker, of No. 61 Piermont street, a grandnephew of the late President and war hero.

Three little pigs at Gaynor's Corners, Appleton, Wis., not realizing their limitations, got too near a half barrel of sour beer that had been thrown out. They got all they could drink and it was enough. When they got through they could not navigate with any degree of certainty. They tried to resume rooting, but their backs were too limp and they finally gave it up.

Joseph Farkis, a mechanic, drew \$982 from the bank the other morning, and after working through the afternoon at his job as a mechanic at Fifty-first street and Tenth avenue started for his home, No. 408 East Sixty-fifth street, New York. He boarded a northbound Tenth avenue car and was jostled by several men. Then he discovered that his pocket was picked. He reported the theft to the detectives of the Second Branch Bureau. The money represented all of Farkis' savings, which he had expected to use in making the first payment on a home.

Following a rattlesnake to its den, Fred Williams, a farmer on the head of Seventy-six creek, Sheridan, Wyo., was attacked by what seemed to him to be hundreds of reptiles. With an ordinary hoe handle Williams killed 211 snakes and only quit because of exhaustion. Williams says the den has two prongs, that he killed snakes from only one side of the winter quarters and believes several hundred reptiles will be found in the unmolested side of the den when he returns there to clean out the nest. The snakes were drowsy and had evidently holed up for the winter, as they were twisted together in knots.

Hostile incidents between the Chinese and Japanese continue. The Chinese government is still protesting against the presence of Japanese forces in China, but restrains her soldiers from any overt acts. The latest protest concerns the Japanese seizure of the German torpedo boat destroyer S90. This vessel, after having sunk the Japanese cruiser Takachiho, was run up on the Chinese coast at a point sixty miles to the south of Tsingtu. The Chinese authorities took possession of her, but the Japanese came along by sea and drove the Chinese away. Herr von Maltzan, the German minister in Peking, has protested to the foreign office against the internment of the S90's crew by China, contending that the Chinese government has permitted Japanese soldiers to land upon her territory without taking them under arrest.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

Cassidy—Man, ye're drunk. Casey—'Tis a lie ye're spakin, Cassidy. Ye'd not dare to say that to me if Oi was sober. Cassidy—If ye wuz sober ye'd hov sinse enough to know ye wuz drunk.

Proud Mother (complacently)—My oldest daughter is studying the languages abroad. She speaks French and Italian as well as she does English. Visitor (innocently)—And does she speak English well?

"They had been married a year before anybody knew it, and even then their secret was discovered only by accident." "Indeed!" "Yes; one evening at a card party they thoughtlessly played partners, and the way they quarreled let the whole thing out!"

"Botheration!" exclaimed Mrs. Laytely, who was hurriedly adjusting her veil. "Where on earth do all the pins go to?" "You've got me," replied her husband thoughtfully, "for, you see, they're always pointed in one direction and headed in another."

"Well, did he pay you?" asked the wife of a dentist who had been to collect a bill for a full set of false teeth that he had made for a man almost a year before. "Pay me?" growled the dentist. "Not only did he refuse to pay me, but he actually had the effrontery to gnash at me—with my teeth!"

When Johnnie was late at school the teacher asked him what had detained him. "We've got a new baby at our house," explained Johnnie, "and I had to go for the doctor." "That's all right," said the teacher, adding from force of habit, "but see that you don't let it happen again."

In a certain school a teacher was giving his class reading. It came to a part about a woman drowning herself. The teacher asked a boy to read again. He began: "She threw herself into the river. Her husband, horror-stricken, rushed to the bank"—The teacher said: "Now, tell me why the husband rushed to the bank?" Quick and sharp came his answer: "Please, sir, to get the insurance money."

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

A GRAND PANORAMA AT THE EXPOSITION.

A panoramic reproduction of the Grand Cañon of Arizona is being built at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at a cost of over \$300,000. Over fifty thousand square yards of linen canvas, imported from Scotland, are being used for the set pieces. Visitors in this concession will view the panoramas from observation parlor cars, moved by electricity on an elevated trestle, seemingly along the rim of the cañon. The observer will be enabled to see eight of the most distinctive points of the cañon, and the ride will last over half an hour, including, apparently, a journey of more than one hundred miles of the great gorge. Every resource of modern science is employed in the work of reproduction.

The Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco next year will open formally February 4 and close December 4, a period of nine months and thirteen days, extending from winter to winter. The exposition grounds contain 625 acres in the "Harbor View" section, forming a natural amphitheater overlooking San Francisco bay and its Golden Gate entrance from the Pacific. These grounds include part of the United State military reservations, the Presidio on one end and Fort Mason on the other. The grounds extend over two miles on the water front and are one-half mile wide. In their center eight of the great exhibition palaces have been grouped together on a parallelogram, separated by spacious courts and avenues adorned with towers, colonnades and statuary, the façades of the buildings forming the walls of the courts, and the whole presenting the appearance of a walled city. The grand total of the expenditure will approximate \$50,000,000.

FINED FOR HUNTING ON HIS OWN FARM IN TOWN.

Ed Bradtl is a farmer living at Canby, Ore. He is also a lover of game and when the season opened he took his gun and went out after pheasants. Incidentally he shot some.

Mr. Bradtl has a forty-acre farm and did not go off his own place for the game. The birds were almost forgotten when a deputy game warden approached him.

"You are Ed Bradtl?" asked the warden.

"Yes, that's me," was the reply.

"Well, you are under arrest," was the startling announcement from the official.

"And what am I arrested for?" questioned the farmer.

"For hunting in the city limits of an incorporated town," said the deputy.

"In the limits of an incorporated town!" repeated the astonished tiller of the soil. "Why, man, I have not been off my own place. I guess I can hunt on my own forty acres out here in the country if I want to, can't I?"

Nevertheless, Mr. Bradtl was arrested and brought to Oregon City and he had his trial before Justice of the Peace J. N. Sievers. Maps of the town of Canby were consulted and much to the surprise of all but the warden, it was learned that the Bradtl place is in the limits of Canby. When it was incorporated the founders of the city left room for expansion.

Bradtl was fined \$5 by Justice Sievers and the fine remitted.

HAS 45 YEARS RECORD AS TRAMP AND HOBO.

After spending forty-five of his seventy-five years in continuous tramping from one State to another, never in all those years having had a place that he could call his home, and having eaten only on the bounty of others, George Gordon has at last found a resting-place in the county asylum at Eloise, Mich. Here he can be sure of food and shelter without fear of barking dogs and scolding women, the necessary complement to leading a vagrant's life.

George was overjoyed to receive the prized ticket to Eloise after an hour's waiting and investigation at Supt. Dolan's hands. He was worrying for fear this should only be a repetition of his previous attempts in smaller towns to obtain shelter, the order to "hit the pike and don't let us see you around here again." With no relatives in this country and only poor ones in Scotland, who have not written him in years, he faced a hopeless winter, until he was allowed to go to Eloise.

"I came to this country from Scotland forty-five years ago," said the aged man, "and one misfortune after another in New York forced me to take up a vagrant's life. I have been traveling in 'side-door Pullmans' since that time, but the 'brakies' have been kind to an old fellow like me, and have rarely put me off. I have never worked for anything, but have begged for nearly half a century, and though no one ever called me the king of tramps, I feel entitled to that name, because of my long hobo's career. Sleeping in fields and barns have left me rheumatic and shaky, and I am afraid my roving days are over."

George stopped here to wipe his dim eyes, and then went on to give his favorite remedy for colds. "Any time you sleep out in a wet field over night and catch cold, three drinks of well water taken before the sun rises will surely cure you," he said. "It has always worked in my case."

Supt. Dolan felt that George was imposing on the county in not having given the community the pleasure of a longer residence before applying for aid.

"However, this isn't Russia," said the head of the poor commission, "so I guess we'll have to take him in." George knows a bath attendant at the poorhouse, with whom he sailed before the mast previous to his tramping career, and is overjoyed at the prospect of spending the long winter days in his company.



VANISHING AND RE-APPEARING EGG.—Very fine, easy to perform and it produces a marvelous and mystifying effect. Egg is made to appear and vanish right before the eyes. Beautifully made. Price, 25c.

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SURPRISE LETTER DRUM.

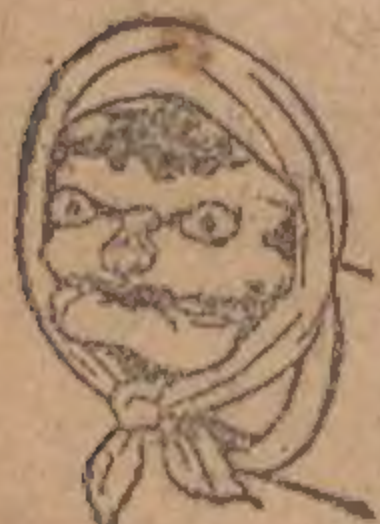
Stung! That was one on you! The joke? You send a friend a letter. He opens it, and that releases the drum. Instantly the sheet of note paper begins to bang and thump furiously, with a ripping, tearing sound. Guaranteed to make a man with iron nerves almost jump out of his skin. You can catch the sharpest wisenheimer with this one. Don't miss getting a few. Price, 6c. each by mail. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.



The Bottle Imp.—The peculiarity of this little bottle is that it cannot be made to lie down, and yet by simply passing the hand over it, the performer causes it to do so. This trick affords great amusement, and is of convenient size to carry about. Price, 10c.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE BAD MOTHER-IN-LAW.



It consists of the eyes, nose and hair to make up a funny old woman's face, using your hand as the medium. The box containing them has full directions for making up the comical old mug. Then you use it as a subject for ventriloquism by merely altering the tones of your voice to make the funny figure appear to talk. Any child can use it and create more fun than an actor on the stage. Price, 8c. each, postpaid.

A. A. WARFORD, 16 Hart St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

THE MAGIC CIGAR CASE.



A beautiful and perfect cigar case, made of imitation alligator and sealskin leather; worth a quarter as a cigar case alone. It can be shown full of cigars and instantly handed to a person, who, upon opening it, finds only an empty case. The box has a secret spring and a double case, and can be operated only by one in the secret. Full printed instructions sent with each case. Every smoker should have one. Price, 20c.; 2 for 35c. by mail, postpaid; one dozen by express, \$1.50.

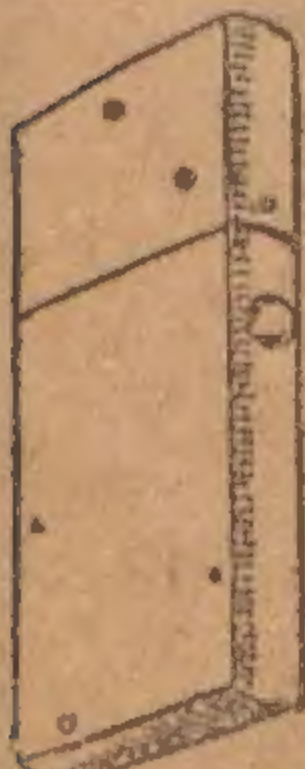
FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.



"KNOCK-OUT" CARD TRICK.—Five cards are shown, front and back, and there are no two cards alike. You place some of them in a handkerchief and ask any person to hold them by the corners in full view of the audience. You now take the remaining cards and request anyone to name any card shown. This done, you repeat the name of the card and state that you will cause it to invisibly leave your hand and pass into the handkerchief, where it will be found among the other cards. At the word "Go!" you show that the chosen card has vanished, leaving absolutely only two cards. The handkerchief is unfolded by any person, and in it is found the identical card. Price, 10c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

SNAP BACK MATCH SAFE.

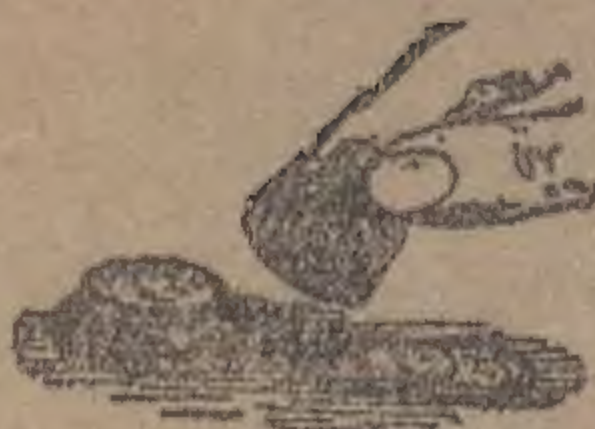


Just out! A trick match safe. It is a beautifully nickelled box, of the size to hold matches. But when your friend presses the spring to take out a match, the lid flies back, and pinches his finger just hard enough to startle without hurting him. This is a dandy!

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THE PEG JUMPER.



A very effective pocket trick, easily to be performed by any one. A miniature paddle is shown. Central holes are drilled through it. A wooden peg is inside of the upper hole. Showing now both sides of the paddle, the performer causes, by simply breathing upon it, the peg to leave the upper hole, and appear in the middle one. Then it jumps to the lower hole, back to the middle one, and lastly to the upper hole. Both sides of the paddle are repeatedly shown. Price by mail, 15c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

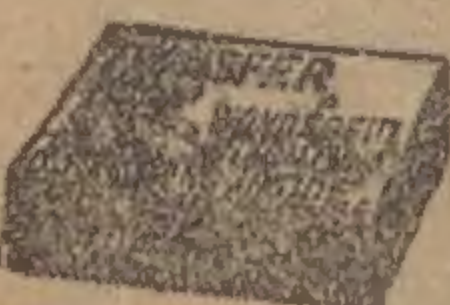
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Price 7 cents each by mail. They are made of durable colored cardboard, fold to the size of 6 1/2 x 3 1/2 inches, and are so handy in size that they can be carried in the pocket. They contain 24 red and black checkers, and are just as serviceable as the most expensive boards made. The box and lid can be fastened together in a moment by means of patent joints in the ends. Full directions printed on each box.

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With this remarkable invention any one can transfer pictures or engravings from newspapers or books, and make perfect copies of butterfly and moth wings for scrap books. It is the dry transfer process, cleanly, handy and reliable, and the results secured will astonish you. Transfer is a gelatinous substance put up in cakes, one of which is enclosed with a wooden rubber and full directions for producing pictures, it requiring but a few moments to make the transfer. Any picture in the newspapers can be speedily reproduced in your album, or elsewhere, a perfect copy being made, and several copies can be made from the same picture. Butterfly and moth wings can also be pictured, all the beautiful colors and markings on the wings being transferred, and thus an interesting and instructive collection of insect forms can be made and permanently preserved in a scrap book. Both young and old will take delight in using Transfer, and the price is so low that all can afford to have this new process at command. Price only 10c., 3 for 25c.; one dozen, 75c., by mail postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE MAGIC CARD BOX.



One of the best and cheapest tricks for giving parlor or stage exhibitions. The trick is performed as follows: You request any two persons in your audience to each select a card from an ordinary pack of cards, you then produce a small handsome box made to imitate pebbled leather, which anyone may examine as closely as they will. You now ask one of the two who have selected cards to place his or her card inside the box, which being done, the lid is shut, and the box placed on the table. You then state that you will cause the cards to disappear and upon opening the box the card has vanished and the box found empty. The other card is now placed in the box; the lid is again closed and when the box is opened the first card appears as strangely as it went. Other tricks can be performed in various ways. You may cause several cards to disappear after they are placed in the box, and then you can cause them all to appear at once. You may tear a card up, place it in the box, and on lifting the cover it will be found whole and entire. In fact, nearly every trick of appearance and disappearance can be done with the Magic Card Box. Full printed instructions, by which anyone can perform the different tricks, sent with each box. Price, 20c. by mail, postpaid.

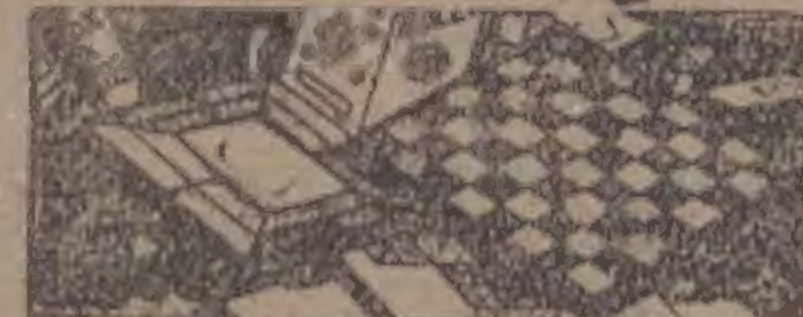
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DOUBLE THROAT CO., Dept. K, Franchtown, N. J.

\$5. Prize Package 10c



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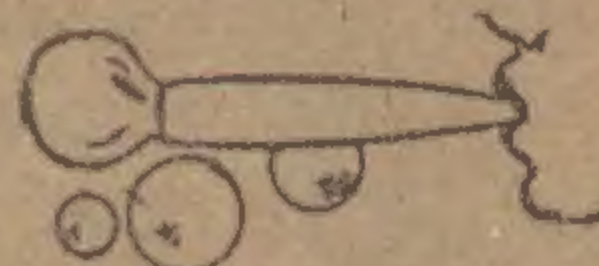
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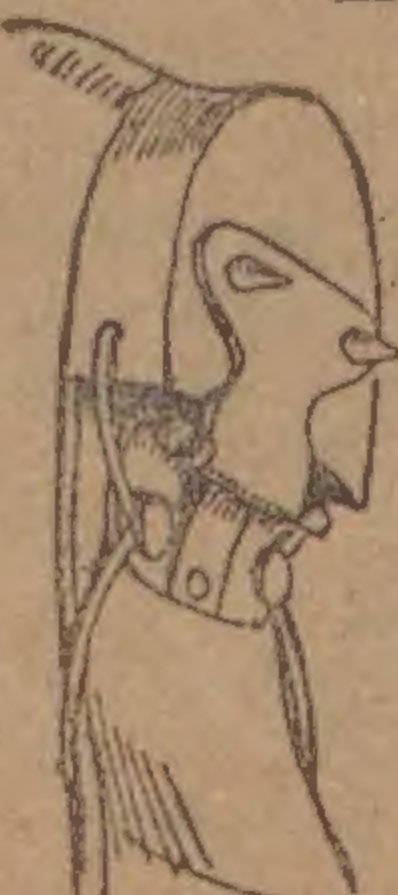
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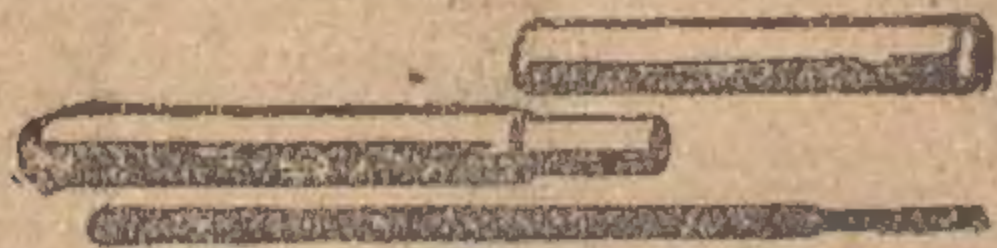
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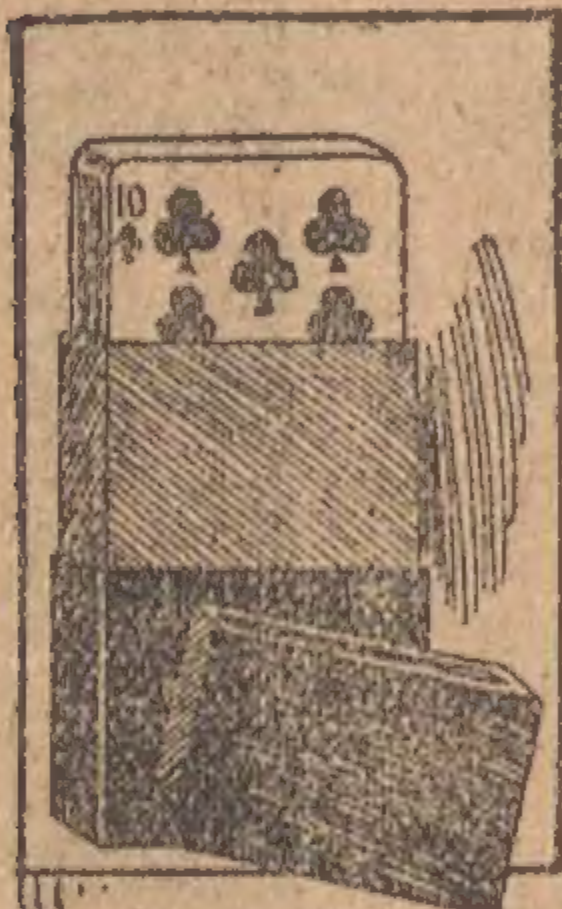


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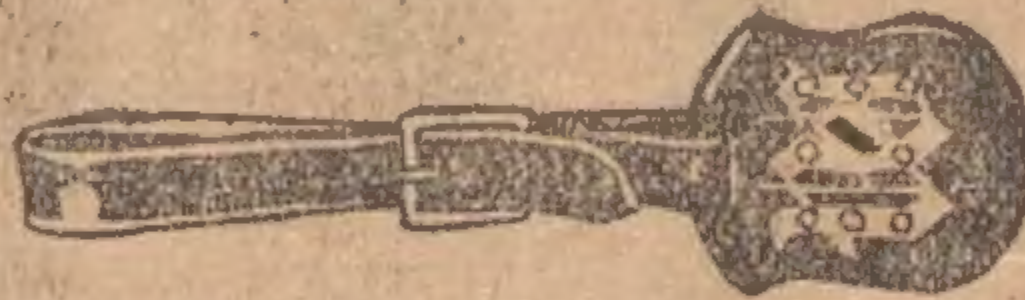
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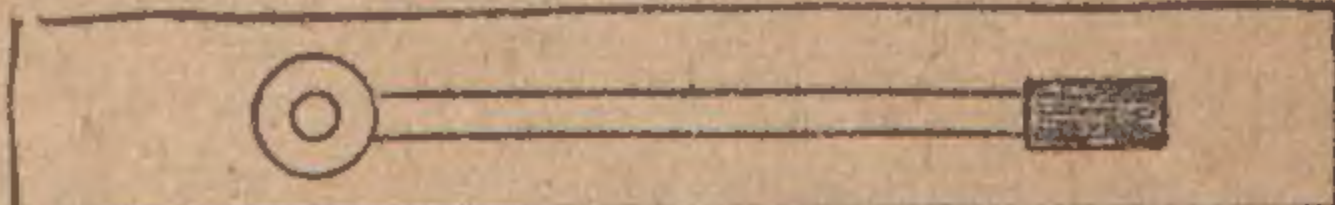


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